



Gender Parity Index 2.0

2023



A Flower Bed is our metaphor for this Report. Flowers are exceptional in their uniqueness, grand in their intricacy, and crucial in the role they play for nature and humankind; similar to the immense value of a gender-diverse workplace.

Gender in itself is a wide spectrum. Fully recognising and acknowledging the diversity that exists within genders, the Gender Parity Index (GPI) focuses on women in the workplace, given that women constitute the majority of non-male genders amongst the working population in the corporate sector in India.

Gender Parity Index 2.0



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Foreword by the National President, FLO



"Achieving gender equality requires the engagement of women and men, girls, and boys. It is everyone's responsibility."

— Ban Ki-moon, Former Secretary-General of the United Nations

To make India a developed country, gender-inclusive growth should be the prime agenda. The gender gap should be bridged for sustainable development, and it is an economic imperative.

FLO's objective is to facilitate a truly inclusive growth trajectory, wherein women can play an equal role. Taking a step forward in this direction, FLO developed the first Gender Parity Index (GPI) for the Indian formal sector in 2016, which was published and disseminated in 2017. It was an important benchmark and was extremely well received.

We are now taking another leap with GPI 2.0, which will revise and upgrade the first Index, analyse, and ascertain causes and consequences between two points and it shall develop key recommendations and recommend milestones. It will also facilitate a process for monitoring the improvements. This will be a follow-up report to assess if the industry has adopted any changes to improve their GPI over the last few years.

It will be even more significant during a time when the nation is working its way towards economic recovery after a downturn due to the pandemic. GPI 2.0 will also try to encapsulate the impact and changes in gender parity at all levels in the formal sector.

The findings will inform policy and recommendations to create a level playing field for women and other non-male genders in the corporate sector, including Government institutions.

This initiative is aligned with the objectives of FLO to encourage and facilitate women to showcase their talents, skills, experiences and energies across sectors and verticals of the economy.

I thank Past President Vinita Bimbhet for taking the lead in putting this together. And it is our pleasure to present the FLO Gender Parity Index 2.0. The data provided in this Report is well researched, invaluable and essential for the economic empowerment of women.

I am sure this index will be – to paraphrase Neil Armstrong – one small step for women heading towards the next giant leap for womankind.

Best Regards,
Jayanti Dalmia
National President, FLO

Note from the Chair – G20 Empower India



As the world is emerging out of an era of multi-layered and compounding crises including the rising cost of living, the pandemic, the climate emergency and large-scale conflict and displacement, the progress towards gender parity has been stalling. As global leaders tackle a growing series of economic and political challenges the risk of reversal is intensifying. Not only are millions of women and girls losing out on access and opportunity at present, but this slowdown in progress towards parity has the potential to become a catastrophe for the future of our economies, societies and communities. Accelerating parity must be a core part of the public and private agenda.

Recognizing the need for understanding the state of gender parity in India, FICCI Ladies Organization (FLO) released the first Gender Parity Index in 2017 which broadly covered aspects related to Employment and Career Progression, Workplace Environment and Women-inclusive policies including Health and Safety.

Widening work-related gender gaps increase the need for re-skilling and re-integration opportunities, strengthened care infrastructure, strengthening female leadership in industries where women are under-represented, and a more proactive approach to preparing the ground for gender parity in the growing industries of the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the exemplary work done by the team in G20 Empower for Gender Parity Index and hope that this Report will serve as a road map and call to action to leaders and the G20 countries to embed gender parity as a central goal of their policies and practices to build a sustained and more equitable and inclusive world. The future of our economies, societies and communities depend on it.

Dr. Sangita Reddy

Chair - G20 Empower India & JMD, Apollo Hospitals Group

Note from the Convener of GPI 2.0



Measurement is crucial to any developmental effort and helps us answer the question: “Has there been a change in the direction we desire?”.

Gender Parity has been central to our goals for a long time, pushing us to create the first Gender Parity Index in 2016, which was subsequently released as a White Paper in 2017 and presented at the UN in 2018 along with a position paper on the Indian Textile Industry. Last year, we published *The Greater 50: Call to Action, Study and Recommendations towards Gender Parity, Equity, and Intelligence*, researching core themes that are tied to creating gender-inclusive workplaces and also sharing recommendations to support organizations in furthering their efforts towards greater parity and equity amongst all genders.

To that end, FLO this year also created a learning session for inclusion. The sessions were provocative, engaging, relevant, meaningful, and designed to lead to a change in mindsets, resulting in a shift in the way we run our businesses and live our lives. As grim as this reality may sound, a huge source of positive potential exists in the ability of those who are willing to change the way they think and act to show their commitment. **Learning is the first step to thinking differently.**

Not only are we committed to continuing our research efforts to support women leaders to reach further and succeed sooner, but we are also committed to making sure that movement in the gender parity landscape within Indian industry is measured regularly, enabling us to make our workplaces diverse, fair, and inclusive. We are publishing the second iteration of the Gender Parity Index – GPI 2.0 – which can serve as a baseline and reference document for leaders across the country who are drivers of inclusive action at the workplace.

We must be **Inclusive On Purpose** and recognise that disparity at any level is not only a compelling human concern but also a significant business disadvantage. With the world inching its way toward sustainability, businesses are under the scrutiny of conscious consumers, employees, and other stakeholders, to show up responsibly. I invite all leaders to reflect and review so that we can continue our efforts toward fair and inclusive workplaces for all genders.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to the Gender Parity Index 2.0, especially Jayanti Dalmia, National President, FLO, for supporting this initiative. Also Satyashiv D'mello and Conscious Development – our knowledge and research partners.

Vinita Bimbhet

Convenor – Gender Parity Index 2.0

Past President, FLO

India Chair, India ASEAN Women's Business Forum

About FLO, the Women's Wing of FICCI



FLO (FICCI Ladies Organization) is the Women's Wing of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI). An all-India forum for women, FLO has its headquarters in New Delhi. With 179 Chapters covering different geographical regions of India, FLO represents over 8000 women entrepreneurs and professionals. With over 39 years of experience, FLO has been promoting entrepreneurship and professional excellence amongst women through workshops, seminars, conferences, training and capacity building programs. The objective is to encourage and facilitate women to showcase their talents, skills, experiences and energies across sectors and verticals of the economy, for a truly inclusive growth trajectory. FLO works with women at 3 levels:

Grassroots – Entrepreneurship & Skill Development programs to make women more employable and absorbable in markets.

Middle – To help women set up their own businesses.

Senior – To promote more women in leadership and Board positions.

This is achieved through awareness programs, training, policy advocacy, training, research and publications, and long term projects which shall empower the pivotal segment of India today as a nation – the greater 50% – women, at every level of the economy and enterprise, FLO has initiated and designed to SUPPORT, EMPOWER AND INSPIRE women in all walks of life to step forward and bring out their best selves.

These include: Training for Workplace Inclusion, Training of Women in Corporate Boards, Digital Financial Literacy, Mentorship, Enterprise Development, Skilling and Training, Legal Empowerment of women at the grassroots level, awareness of basic legal rights at the workplace, State-level on-ground livelihood interventions through CSR, webinars on women-centric issues, thought leadership to formulate guidelines for women at the workplace, inspirational talks for girl students to pursue STEM education, Mental Health and Wellness workshops, and special acknowledgment to women-led/women-focused positive stories and interventions.

Gender Parity

Since this Report focusses on Gender Parity in the corporate sector in India, it would be useful to describe what we consider as Gender Parity, so as to establish a common understanding with the readers of this Report.

Gender Parity is a measure used to describe the proportionate representation of men and women in a given group (also referred to as sex ratio). In the field of Sociology, Gender Parity refers to a binary distinction between people based on identity and sex differences. Though the word "Gender" is part of the term, the meaning in this context is closer to an individual's assigned sex than to their gender identity.

The term Gender Parity is also used to define the ratio between any quantifiable indicator amongst women vis a vis the same indicator amongst men. For example, pay or benefits.

The terms Gender Parity, Gender Equality and Gender Equity are often used interchangeably. However, Gender Parity differs from Gender Equality and Gender Equity to the extent that it is a descriptive measure and does not involve value judgements or moral arguments in the way Gender Equality or Gender Equity do.

Nevertheless, Gender Parity is an important metric to assess the state of Gender Equality and Gender Equity within a group, organization or community.

Executive Summary

For several decades, the participation of women in the workforce has been a cause for concern, globally, as well as in India. While India has witnessed an increased rate of participation by women in the labour force over the past 2 decades, when compared to countries with similar levels of economic development, the growth trajectory has been slow. This is largely due to cultural norms and biases that discourage women from entering the workforce. Women's participation in the workforce should have been closer to parity with increasing attention on this aspect of diversity, but there are indications that parity is decreasing, particularly in the formal sector. Global institutions including The World Bank and the International Labour Organization (ILO) have raised concerns about the slow pace of growth of women's participation in the formal sector. As of now, the women to men workforce participation ratio in India is around 1:4.

Organizations such as FICCI Ladies Organization (FLO) are concerned about this issue and have been taking steps to generate greater awareness in Indian industry and Government about the issue. Amongst other initiatives, FLO has advocated for urgent acceleration of the pace of engagement of women in the workforce so as to achieve gender parity. As part of this initiative, FICCI FLO developed the Gender Parity Index (GPI) in 2017 which raised concerns about gender ratio being far from on par in the formal sector in India. After about 5 years of this GPI, FLO has made an attempt to revise the GPI and re-assess whether the status has changed in favor of women in corporate India. This Report presents the revised Gender Parity Index (GPI 2.0) and makes comparisons with the first GPI 2017 to ascertain the changes in specific components of women's participation in the workforce in India. The GPI 2.0 is also aligned to the goals and purpose of the G20 Empower Initiative.

The methodology adopted to develop the GPI 2017 was adapted to make GPI 2.0 relevant to the current context, especially in a post COVID-19 scenario, and also to ensure that a comparison between 2 versions of the GPI was possible. A self-administered online survey tool was designed and people currently employed in the corporate sector in India were approached to voluntarily participate in the survey. A total of 215 responses was collected online and the data was analyzed to present the findings, as discussed in this Report.



Apart from the 215 online responses, one-on-one discussions were also held with experts and corporate practitioners of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) to gain deeper insight into what the data from the online survey revealed.

The questions included in the survey tool were categorized into 5 components and analysis was carried out for each of these components, along with the consolidated score of all the components, making it the final GPI 2.0. The 5 components of GPI 2.0 are:

- A. Management Commitment to Gender Parity
- B. Employment and Career Progression
- C. Workplace Environment
- D. Senior Management and Board Diversity
- E. Inclusive Policies including Health, Safety and Prevention of Sexual Harassment

For analysis the data, the GPI 2.0 and each of its 5 components were classified into 4 levels as follows:

Excellent	Good	Average	Needs Improvement
Above 80% score	61% to 80% score	41% to 60% score	Up to 40% score

Within the survey, the proportion of women respondents was higher than men (61% women vs 38% men) and only 3 respondents identified themselves as 'other gender'. Over half (56%) of the men respondents were in the 21-40 years category, while 60% of the women respondents were in the 41-60 years category. The largest proportion of these respondents (74%) were at senior management or Board level, and the remaining 26% were represented by people in middle to junior management, support staff and consultants/part-time workers. Almost 44% of these respondents were working in large organizations (with an annual turnover of over Rs. 10 Cr). The representation of the Manufacturing sector was highest at 26%, closely followed by Information Technology (IT) / Information Technology-enabled Services (ITeS) at 22%.

The GPI 2.0 data suggests that overall, 57% organizations were in the “Average” category and another 31% were in the “Good” category, while only 3% were at “Excellent” and 10% were in the “Needs Improvement” category, i.e. they severely lack gender parity.

While the earlier GPI 2017 and GPI 2.0 may not be absolutely comparable (due to changes in the context and therefore the questionnaire), nevertheless, at a broad level it can be seen that very little progress has been made in the last 5 years with respect to gender parity in corporate India. In the earlier GPI 2017, there were only 2% organizations in the “Excellent” category and 7% in the “Needs Improvement” category.

The status of organizations was particularly concerning with regards to gender parity at (a) Senior Management and Board level (49% organizations fell in the “Needs Improvement” category) and (b) Inclusiveness of policies, where almost a quarter of organizations fell in the “Needs Improvement” category.

Of all the organizations that were ranked in the “Needs Improvement” category, over 60% were those with an annual turnover up to Rs. 10 Cr., indicating that there are significant numbers of large organizations where gender parity is far below a satisfactory ratio. The Manufacturing sector was identified as one with the lowest gender parity, as 3 out of 4 organizations were in the “Needs Improvement” or “Average” category. The Not-for-Profit sector was the best performing with respect to gender parity as 67% of organizations were in the “Good” category (although the representation of the Not-for-Profit sector was only 3% of the total sample).

Leadership at the top (senior management and Board level) has a major influence in policy formulation and implementation within an organization and this should also hold true for bringing about gender parity within the functioning of the organization. Data suggests that over 90% of organizations with men dominating at the Board level are in the “Needs Improvement” category and 2 out of 3 organizations with gender parity at the Board level are in the “excellent” category.

The component-wise status of organizations is presented in the table below:

Component of GPI 2.0	Proportion of Organizations at Different Levels of Gender Parity			
	Excellent	Good	Average	Needs Improvement
Management Commitment to Gender Parity	35%	50%	13%	2%
Employment and Career Progression	7%	40%	44%	9%
Workplace Environment	5%	49%	39%	7%
Senior Management and Board Diversity	6%	17%	28%	49%
Inclusive Policies	16%	29%	32%	23%

In summary, many organizations indicate management commitment or intent to bring about gender parity, but not much is being done in practice to improve the women to men participation ratio within these organizations.

Gender parity is influenced by the size of the organization (the larger the better) and the sector, but the overall situation remains one of concern for the corporate sector in India.

No real change in the status of gender parity since GPI 2017 could be observed through the data.

A distinct aspect that is likely to influence gender parity in organizations is gender parity at the Senior Management and Board level, as this is found to be strongly related to each of the gender parity components in GPI 2.0.

Following the analysis of the 5 components of GPI 2.0, this Report provides Recommendations for the way forward. While they are not an all-inclusive list, they suggest multiple pathways that address many of the fundamental issues of gender parity, with the aim of creating more of a balance in corporate India.

Introduction

Participation of women in the workforce in the formal sector in India has long been a cause for concern. The Global Gender Gap Report (2021) published by the World Economic Forum mentions that India has slipped from 128 to 140 position in terms of gender parity in the workforce in India^[1] and is amongst the 10 bottom-most countries as far as women's participation in the workforce^[2] is concerned. The World Bank reports that participation of women in the labour force in India has decreased from 30% in 1991 to 21% in 2019. According to data from the International Labour Organization (ILO), India's female Labour Force Participation Rates (LFPR) has been on a downward curve, falling from 32% in 2005 to 19.2% in 2021. In addition, female LFPR rates are persistently low in comparison to India's global peers. On a relative scale, India's female LFPR was ranked at 222nd out of 235 countries for which data was available.

In India,^[3] while a large proportion of women don't participate in the workforce, most who do work in the informal sector. The Government of India has been proactive in taking measures to engage with women so that their access to markets and financial resources improves, thereby motivating them to participate in the workforce. Measures at policy level have been implemented such as equal wages for work, childcare facility under MNREGA and increasing paid maternity leave to 26 weeks and prenatal leave to 8 weeks. India also adopted the Equal Remuneration Act 2019, further giving women the right to receive wages equal to men.

The Hon'ble Prime Minister of India has exhorted Indian industry to use flexible workplaces to encourage a higher number of women to work and thereby achieve a 50% women workforce by 2047. In her 2023 Union Budget presentation speech, the Hon'ble Finance Minister of India emphasised "Nari Shakti" (woman power) as the key to India's prosperity and bright future. Nevertheless, while over the years, recognition of the value of women's contribution to India's economy has been reiterated by political leadership and think tanks, the road to achieving gender parity has proven to be long, winding and difficult to navigate.

[1] <https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2021>

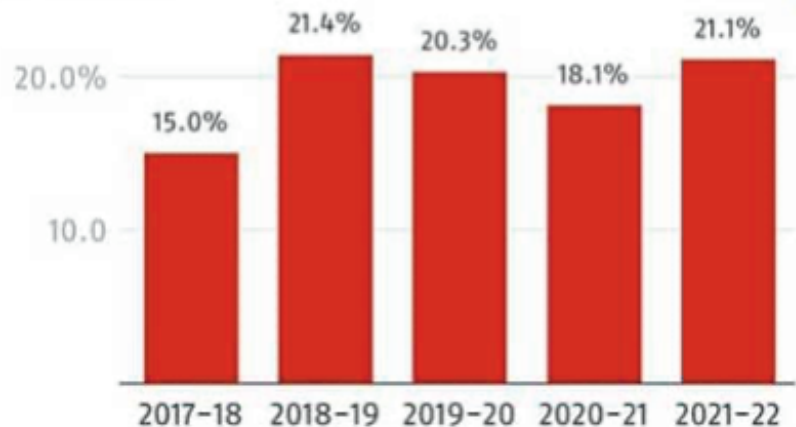
[2] <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/india-s-workforce-is-masculinising-rapidly-1560150389726.html>

[3] <https://www.cfr.org/womens-participation-in-global-economy/case-studies/india/>

During 2020–21, in India, there was 1 woman in employment against 5 men. This ratio has improved to 1:4 in 2021–22, but it is still far from gender parity. Women have closed the gap in the last few years but a lot more needs to be done to reach a reasonable level of gender parity in the workforce in India.^[4]

Females are closing the gender gap in formal employment

(Net additions of women to the EPF, as % of total net additions)



A research study by Azim Premji University indicated that more women lost their jobs during the COVID–19 lockdown as compared to men^[5] and women were also disproportionately affected in terms of wage cuts, further motivating women to quit their jobs.

In 2017, FICCI Ladies Organization (FLO) made an attempt to understand the situation of gender parity within the formal sector in India and introduced the Gender Parity Index (GPI), for the first time, for corporate India. Constructed through a survey with individuals and organizations, the GPI included the following 6 components of gender parity:

- A. Setting the Tone at the Top
- B. Employment and Career Progression
- C. Workplace Environment
- D. Senior Management and Board Diversity
- E. Women–inclusive Policies including Health and Safety
- F. Gender Sensitization and Prevention of Sexual Harassment

This effort was widely appreciated by corporate India as the findings and recommendations were disseminated to interested audiences to support policy–making and initiatives towards gender parity.

[4] <https://www.dhyeyaias.com/current-affairs/daily-current-affairs/women-closing-the-gap-in-formal-employment-but-gender-disparity-remains>

[5] <https://cse.azimpremjiuniversity.edu.in/state-of-working-india/swi-2021/>

FLO has worked to revise and update the Gender Parity Index (GPI) in 2023 and launched GPI 2.0 that builds upon the first GPI 2017, and also calibrates itself to the changing environment, making it more relevant in the current context. FLO expects that GPI 2.0 will be disseminated at multiple levels of both the Government and the corporate sector in India, and due cognizance will be taken of the current status of gender parity in the formal sector in India, along with the Recommendations made in this Report.

Methodology

With due consultations with gender experts and review of available literature, a closed ended quantitative questionnaire was designed to gather data from respondents. To protect the privacy of individuals participating in the survey, their identification details such as individual name and contact details, and the name of their organization were not sought. After asking some questions about their work profile and the profile of their organization, the questionnaire included a total 56 questions, seeking information about gender parity in their organization. These questions were later categorized into the following 5 components:



The self-administered survey tool was uploaded on a secure website and the link was shared with individuals and organizations with a request to participate in the survey. Support from FLO and its regional chapters was sought to circulate the link, which helped in reaching out to the appropriate audience. The survey was live for approx. 2 months (December 2022 – January 2023) and individuals were approached to voluntarily participate in the survey. A total of 215 respondents completed the survey, and data was downloaded from the server and analyzed as per the plan. Apart from the online survey, one-on-one discussions were held with experts and practitioners in Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) to gain further insight into the data that the online survey threw up.

The response to each question was graded at 3 levels i.e. favors men (scored as 0), favors women (scored as 1) and parity between the 2 genders (scored as 2). The details of each question under each of the 5 components is presented in the table below.

Component	Theme	Question	Options	Scoring
Component A: Management Commitment to Gender Parity				
A1	Workplace Policies	Do HR policies of your organization (including recruitment, promotion, salary, termination) favor any particular gender?	Yes, favors women	1
			Yes, favors men	0
			Yes, favors other genders	1
			No, same for all genders	2
			Don't Know	0
			No policies at all	0
			Don't Want to Answer	0
A2	Welfare Initiatives	Employee Welfare initiatives	Sometimes favor women	1
			Often favor women	1
			Similar for both genders	2
			Sometimes favor men	0
			Often favor men	0
A3	Business/ Vendor Relationships	To what extent does your organization work with vendors / suppliers that are women-owned / other (non-male) gender owned?	Yes, many	2
			Yes, but only some	2
			Yes, but very few	1
			No	0
			Don't Know	0

Component	Theme	Question	Options	Scoring
Component B: Employment and Career Progression				
B1	Representation of Women in the Organization	Employee gender ratio in the organization	Yes, favors women	1
			Yes, favors men	0
			No, same for all genders	2
B2	Attrition Rates and Staff Reduction Policies and Practices	In the last 1.5 years (April 2021 to September 2022) what was the gender distribution of people who resigned from the organization (at any level)?	More women resigned than men	0
			Similar for both genders	2
			More men resigned than women	1
			Don't Know	0
		During COVID 19 (April 2019 till March 2021), in what ways did gender influence the resignation/termination of employees in your organization?	No one resigned/ was terminated	0
			More men resigned/ were terminated as compared to women	1
			More women resigned/ were terminated as compared to men	1
			Similar number of men and women resigned / were terminated	2
			Don't Know	0
			If your organization needs to reduce its staff strength for any reason, between 3 equally competent and contributing employees - one woman, one man and one other gender - in your opinion, who will the organization choose to terminate?	Woman
		Man		1
		Other Gender		2
		It's On Merit		2
Don't Know				
Don't want to answer	0			

B3	Career Progression	Between equally competent and contributing employees – woman, man and other gender – in your opinion, who will the organization promote to the next position, if there is only 1 position available?	Woman	1
			Man	1
			Other Gender	1
			It's On Merit	2
			Don't Know	0
			Don't want to answer	0
B4	Training and Development	Training for career progression within the organization	Sometimes favors women	1
			Often favors women	1
			Similar for both genders	2
			Sometimes favors men	0
			Often favors men	0
		In the last one year (April 2021 to March 2022) what was the gender distribution amongst people who were offered mentoring / special training / coaching / skill enhancement opportunities by your organization?	More women were offered the opportunity than men	1
			More men were offered the opportunity than women	1
			Equal proportion of women and men got the opportunity	2
			No such opportunities were provided to staff	0
			Don't Know	0
		Nomination for special courses / advanced trainings	Sometimes favors women	1
			Often favors women	1
			Similar for both genders	2
			Sometimes favors men	0
			Often favors men	0

Component	Theme	Question	Options	Scoring
Component C: Workplace Environment				
C1	Pay Parity	Is your salary equal to colleagues from other genders who are equally qualified and experienced and at the same level?	Get equal salary as counterpart from other genders	2
			Women get higher salary	1
			Women get lower salary	0
			No one for comparison	0
			Don't now	0
			Don't want to answer	0
C2	Recognition and Rewards	Employee recognition / rewards	Sometimes favors women	1
			Often favors women	1
			Similar for both genders	2
			Sometimes favors men	0
			Often favors men	0
C3	Back to work	Does your organization have a "back to work" program / policy for employees?	No	0
			Yes but not implemented	0
			Yes and implemented	2
			Yes for men employees	0
			Yes for women employees	1

C4	Supportive Working Conditions and Facilities	Does your organization take initiatives to ensure an environment where people from all genders feel safe, comfortable, and cared for?	Several initiatives taken	2
			Some initiatives taken	1
			Namesake only	1
			No initiatives	0
			Don't know	0
		What efforts do you see within your organization to create gender sensitization amongst employees?	Information Education Communication (IEC) materials like posters, digital materials, etc. are used	2
			Special gender sensitization workshops	2
			Gender sensitization is a topic of conversation in staff sessions / town halls	1
			Any other	1
			No such initiatives	0
		Does your organization provide child care facilities at the workplace (such as creche / nursery for small children)?	Yes	2
			No policy but children can be taken to work	1
			No policy and children can't be taken to work	0
			Don't know	0
		Work from Home flexibility offered by the organization	Sometimes favors women	1
			Often favors women	1
			Similar for both genders	2
			Sometimes favors men	0
			Often favors men	0

Component	Theme	Question	Options	Scoring
Component D: Senior Management and Board Diversity				
D1	Representation on the Board	Board of Directors	More women than men	1
			More men than women	0
			Almost similar	2
D2	Representation in Senior Management	Senior Management	More women than men	1
			More men than women	0
			Almost similar	2
D3	Assigning Critical Functions	What % of critical Functions in the organization (e.g. Sales, Marketing, R&D, Production, Customer Service, HR, Supply Chain, etc.) are headed by women and/or other non-male genders?	Over 50%	1
			Between 30-50%	2
			Between 10-30%	1
			Less than 10%	0
			Don't Know	0
			Don't want to answer	0
D4	Assigning Revenue Generating Functions	What % of revenue generating Functions in the organization are headed by women and/or other non-male genders?	Over 50%	1
			Between 30-50%	2
			Between 10-30%	1
			Less than 10%	0
			Don't Know	0
			Don't want to answer	0

Component	Theme	Question	Options	Scoring
Component E: Inclusive Policies including Health, Safety and Prevention of Sexual Harassment				
E1	Maternity Leave	Days of Paid Maternity Leave	< 90 days	0
			90 - 179 days	1
			180+ days	2
E2	Paternity Leave	Days of Paid Paternity Leave	< 15 days	0
			15 - 30 days	1
			30+ days	2
E3	Grievance Redressal	In the Grievance Redressal Committee of your organization, what is the gender distribution?	More women than men	1
			More men than women	1
			Equal number of men and women	2
			No Grievance Redressal Mechanism	0
			Don't Know	0
	Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Workplace Policy	Does your office/work location display information about the Committee (or mechanism) formed to deal with Prevention of Sexual Harassment at the Workplace?	Yes	2
			There is a policy but not displayed/ communicated	1
			No policy on prevention of sexual harassment at the workplace	0
			There is a policy but no Committee	0
			Don't know	0
		Don't want to answer	0	
E4	Health and Wellness	Do Health and Wellness policies of your organization (medical leave, insurance, medical reimbursements, maternity leave, childcare, stress management programs, etc.) adequately fulfil the specific needs of staff of specific gender?	Yes, of all gender staff	2
			Yes, of women staff	1
			Yes, of men staff	1
			Yes, of other gender staff	1
			No policies	0
			Don't Know	0

The total score of each respondent was calculated for each of the 5 components and each respondent was then classified into 1 of 4 categories as mentioned below:

Excellent	Good	Average	Needs Improvement
Above 80% score	61% to 80% score	41% to 60% score	Up to 40% score

Once the categorization was done, a detailed analysis was carried out, which is presented in the next chapter.

Data Consistency

The categorization of data appeared to be reasonable and there was a reasonable consistency within the data, as observed from the correlation matrix below:

Components	Components				
	A	B	C	D	E
A	1	0.237	0.414	0.285	0.13
B	0.237	1	0.254	0.246	0.189
C	0.414	0.414	1	0.206	0.458
D	0.285	0.246	0.206	1	0.001
E	0.13	0.189	0.458	0.001	1

A statistically significant positive correlation between all components indicates that all the components are associated with each other and a change in one of the components is likely to alter the values in other components, which is likely to be the case in a real world scenario. Therefore, the data obtained through the survey is reliable and valid for conducting any further analysis.

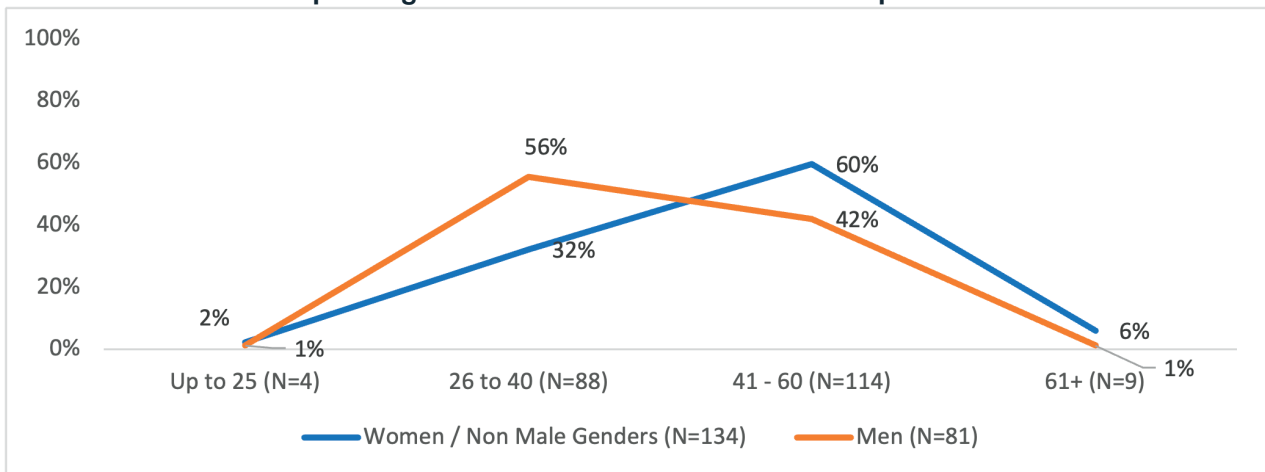


Respondent Profile

1. Gender and Age

A total of 215 individuals completed the online survey, of which 131 (61%) were women, 81 (38%) were men and the remaining 3 (2%) individuals did not disclose their gender and were included as non-male gender for the purpose of data analysis. The median age of the respondents was 44 years and ranged between 22 years to 67 years. The distribution of age and gender can be viewed in the table below:

Graph 1: Age and Gender Distribution of Respondents



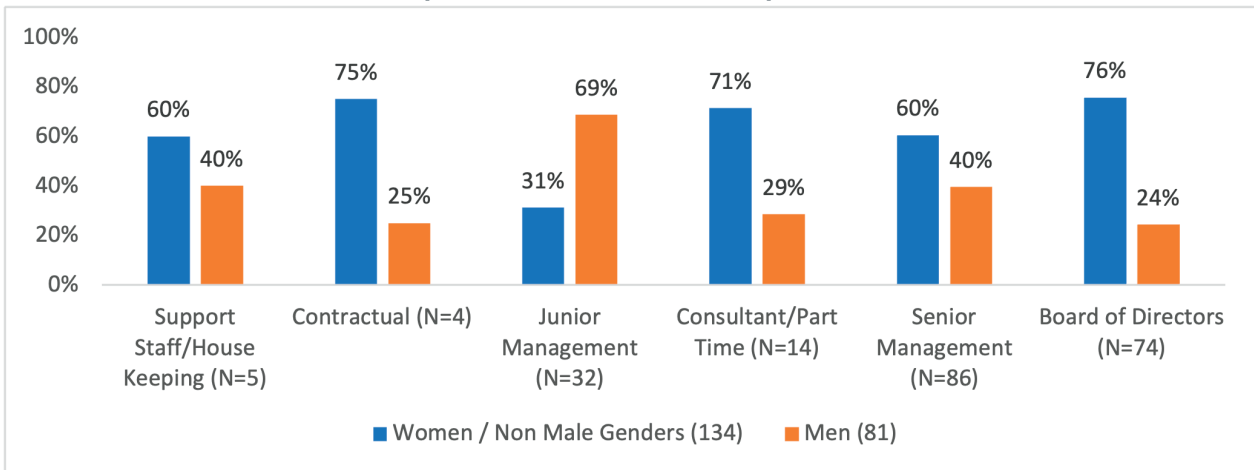
The data suggests that in the 26–40 years age group, men outnumber women, and this is primarily because this is typically the peak of childbearing age for women and their representation declines in the workforce. However, it is good to note that this picks up after 40 years of age, indicating that women are likely to return to work after their childbearing phase.

However, it is important to note here that this is the profile of individuals who completed the survey and is not, in any way, the representation of their organizations.

2. Work Profile

The respondents to this survey had a varied work profile, as indicated in the graph below:

Graph 2: Work Profile of Respondents

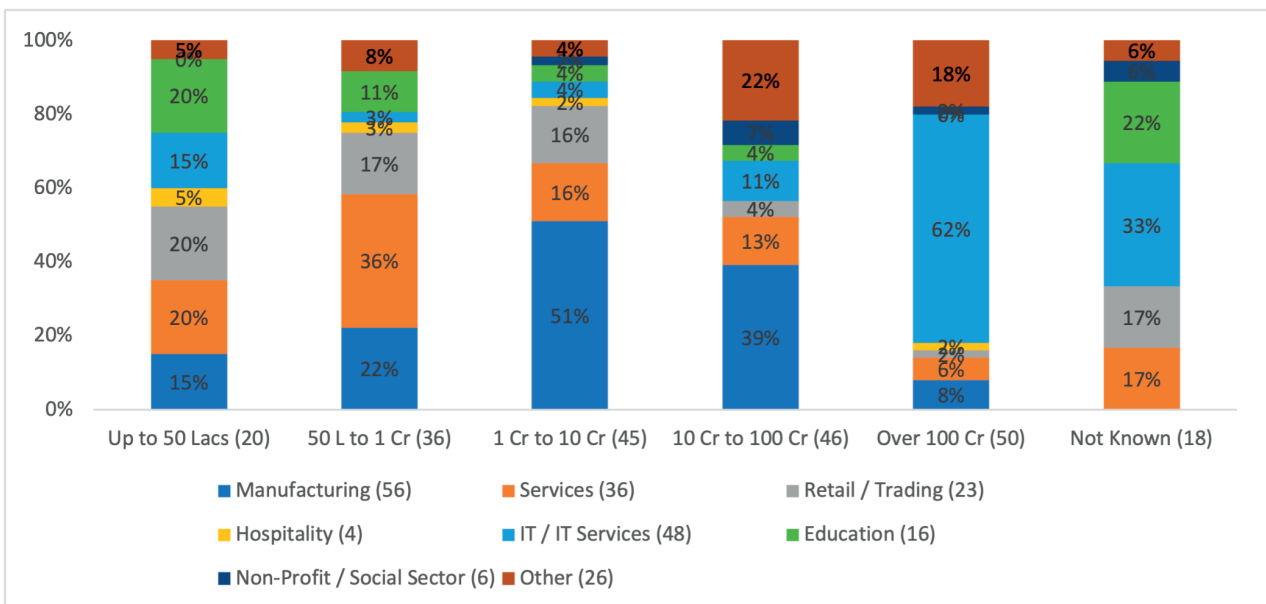


The data indicates that except for junior management (where men outnumber women), at all other levels of the organization, there are more women as compared to men. More than anything, this appears to be a sample bias, with more women completing the survey than men. For example, more women than men at senior management or Board level completed the survey, but in no way does this mean that there are more women at senior management or Board level, as compared to men.

3. Organization Profile

The survey included a couple of questions regarding the sector / industry the respondents are currently working in and the findings, as reported by the respondents, are captured in the graph below:

Graph 3: Revenue and Industry Type

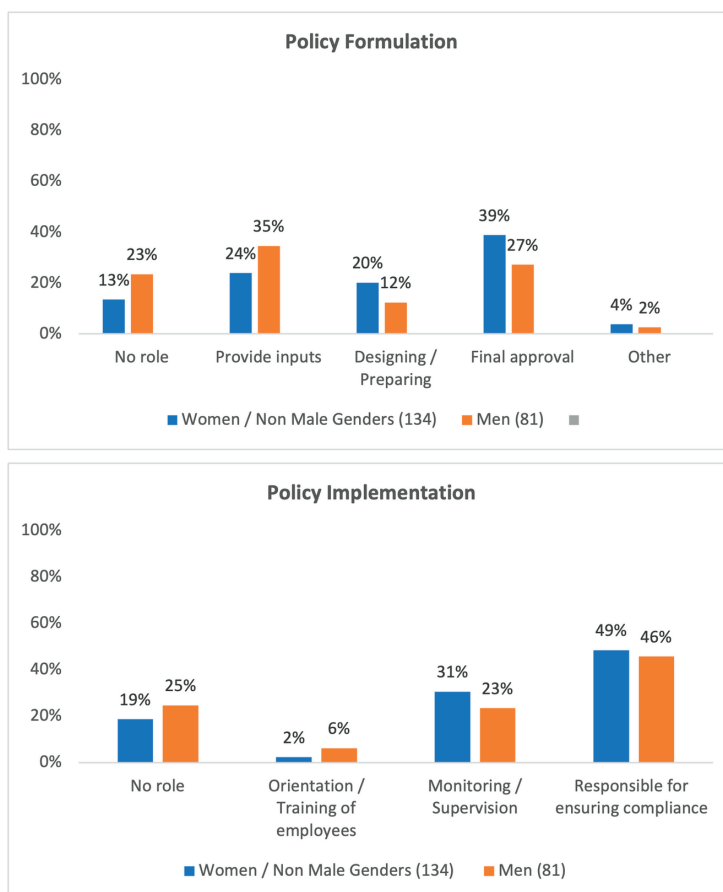


While interpreting the inferences drawn from this section, it is important to acknowledge that Manufacturing and Information Technology (IT) / Information Technology-enabled Services (ITeS) are the 2 sectors that represent almost half (48%) of the total sample. Similarly, organizations with over Rs. 10 Cr annual turnover constitute 46% of the total sample.

4. Policy-related responsibility of the Respondents within the Organization

A question was asked about the role of respondents in policy formulation and implementation within their organization, and their responses are presented in the graph below:

Graph 4: Policy-related roles within the Organization



The data suggests that more women have decision-making roles in policy formulation and implementation as compared to men, but this is essentially because within the sample, there are more women with decision-making responsibilities (senior management and Board level), as compared to men. This is a sampling bias, which could not be managed, as data was gathered through an open online survey.

Gender Parity Index (GPI) 2.0

General Insights:

As discussed in the Methodology section earlier, a total Gender Parity Index (GPI) was calculated for each respondent. While this may not be the case (i.e. more than 1 person from the same organization may have contributed to this survey), for the purpose of analysis in this report, it is assumed each respondent represents a separate organization and hence the Index is a representation of an organization. Therefore, while the Index is calculated as per the perception of the respondents, it is considered to be the current status of their respective organizations in terms of gender parity.

At first, the composite GPI was calculated that included all 5 components of the Index, discussed in the Methodology section earlier, and the findings are depicted in the graph below:

Graph 5: Overall Gender Parity amongst Organizations



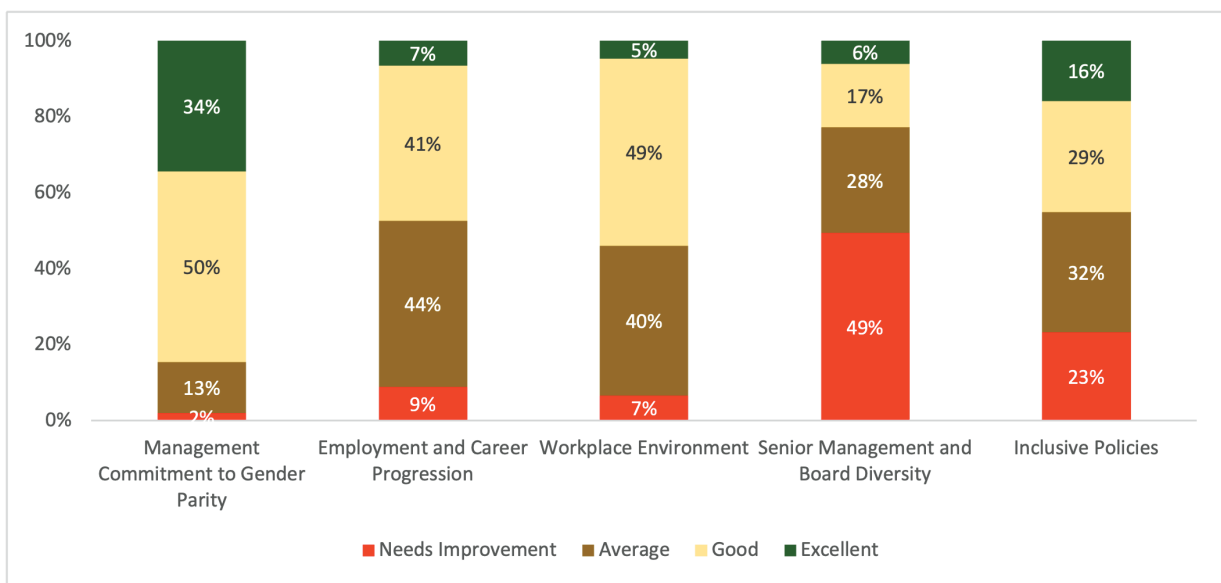
As the data suggests,

very few organizations are performing "excellently" in terms of gender parity, and many "need to make significant improvement" to bring about gender parity in various aspects of their functioning.

While GPI 2.0 may not be exactly comparable with the earlier GPI 2017 (as the components and their categorization were slightly different), even in the earlier GPI, only 2% of organizations were rated as "excellent" and 7% "needed significant improvement". This is an indication that the situation in the corporate India is not progressing at the desired pace to bring about gender parity in their functioning at various levels.

Further attempts were made to understand the contribution of each of the 5 components in the overall GPI 2.0. This is represented in the graph below:

Graph 6: Component-specific Gender Parity



In the above graph, it is interesting to note that

while 84% of respondents believe that Management Commitment to Gender Parity is "good" or "excellent", this rating does not speak to the other 4 components.

The graph indicates that within organizations, Senior Management and Board Diversity and Inclusiveness of Policies within organizations are far from being on par gender-wise and these 2 components bring down the composite scores of the organizations. 77% of respondents believe Senior Management and Board Diversity "needs improvement" or is "average", which is alarming. The situation is comparable to that assessed in the earlier GPI 2017 where only 6% of organizations reported gender parity at the Board level, i.e. 50% of their Board comprised women.

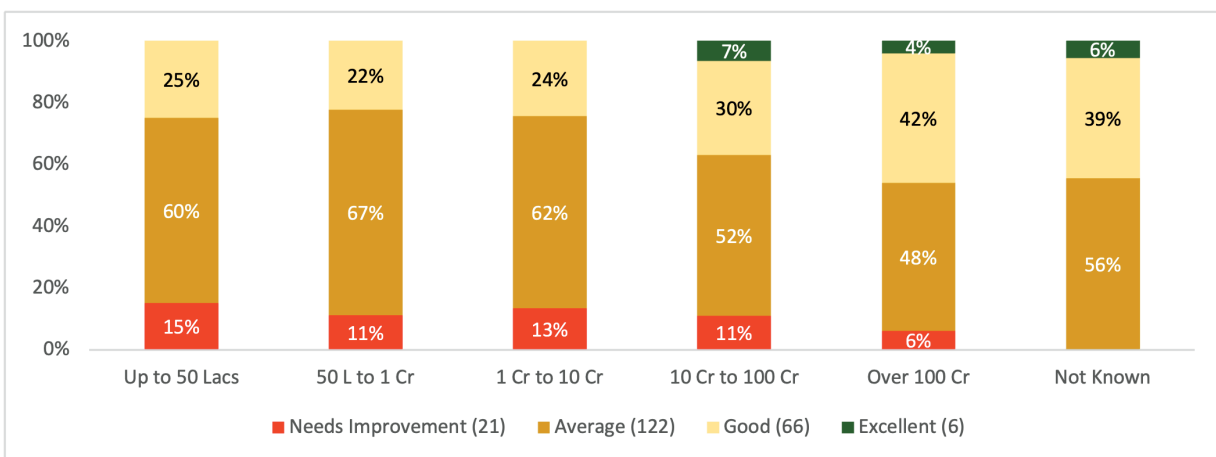
The graph above also indicates that

55% of respondents believe Inclusiveness of Policies is "average" or "needs improvement" and 53% of respondents believe gender parity in Employment and Career Progression either "needs improvement" or is "average".

Both responses indicate significantly high dissatisfaction with the status quo.

Gender parity within an organization is expected to be dependent on the size (often related to annual revenues of the organization). It is thus expected that larger organizations will have greater gender parity, as they are more resourced and their systems are more structured as compared to smaller organizations. The composite Index was correlated with the annual revenues of the organization and the interpretation can be seen in the graph below:

Graph 7: Gender Parity in relation to Organizational Size – Annual Revenues



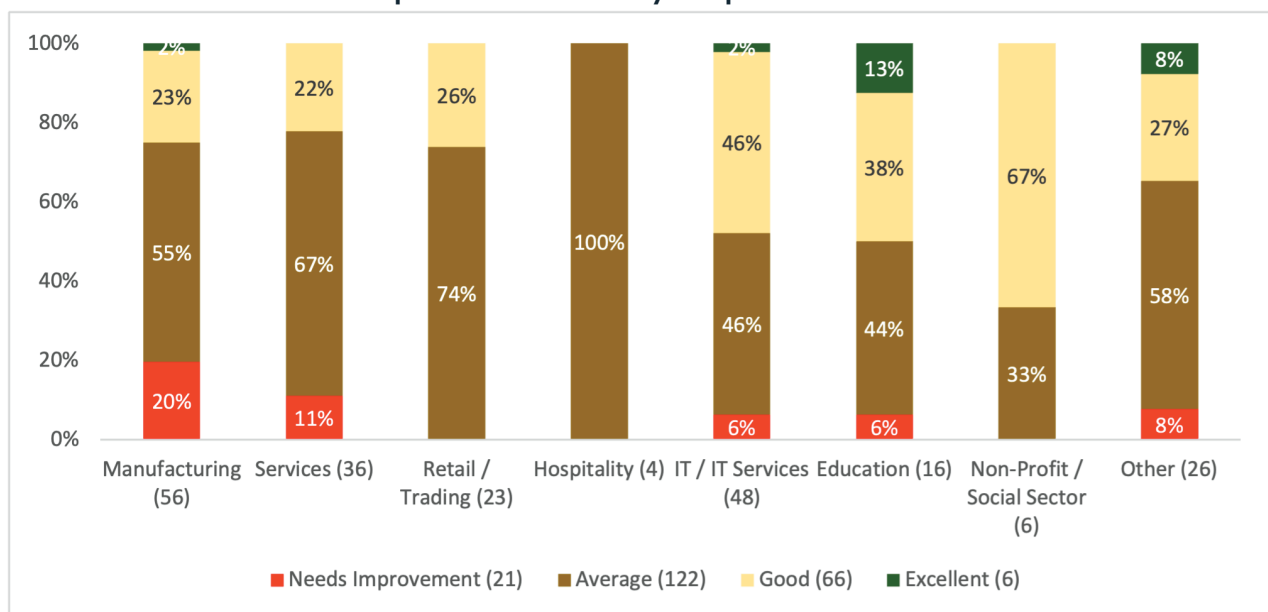
For annual revenues of up to Rs. 10 Cr, not a single organization holds “excellent” status in terms of gender parity. However, for over Rs. 10 Cr annual revenues, there are about 10% organizations in the “excellent” category, thereby proving the hypothesis stated above. However, it is important to note that

gender parity within larger organizations (with over Rs. 10 Cr. in annual revenues) is not at a desired level, with most organizations in the “average” category (scoring between 40% – 60% of the maximum obtainable score).

This implies that these organizations have taken initial steps towards gender parity in some area, but a lot is yet to be accomplished.

Considering these findings, it would be important to see if there are sector-specific differences in terms of gender parity, and the status is depicted in the graph below:

Graph 8: Gender Parity in Specific Sectors

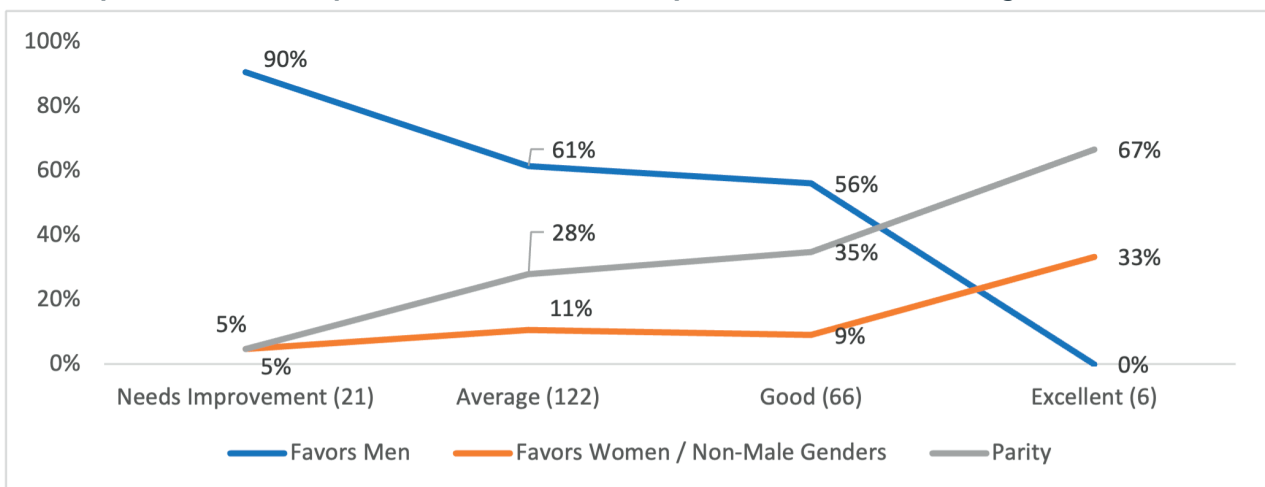


It is important to note that in 4 out of 7 sectors, none of the organizations has an “excellent” score in the composite Index. However 3 out of 7 sectors also do not have any organization in the “needs improvement” category. The inference is that many of these sectors have progressed towards achieving gender parity, but more efforts are needed to achieve desirable levels of parity.

The Education sector has the largest proportion of organizations in the “excellent” category, which is understandable as the Education sector generally employs more women than men.

Leadership at the top has a major influence in policy formulation and implementation within the organization and this should hold true for fostering gender parity within the organization. Within the survey, a question was asked about Board composition and each organization was categorized into 3 levels i.e., 0 (when it favors men); 1 (when it favors women) and 2 (when there is parity) and an attempt was made to see how Board composition contributes to the overall Gender Parity Index. The results are depicted in the graph below:

Graph 9: Relationship between Gender Parity at Board Level and Organization Level



Graph 9 shows that over 90% of the organizations with men dominating in terms of representation at the Board level are in the “needs improvement” category and 2 out of 3 organizations with gender parity at the Board level are in the “excellent” category. This suggests that

gender parity at the Board level greatly contributes to bringing about gender parity at an organizational level.

**Component B:
Employment and
Career Progression**

**Component A:
Management Commitment
to Gender Parity**

**5 Comp
Meas
in the C**

**Component C:
Workplace Environment**

**Component D:
Senior Management and
Board Diversity**

**Component E:
Inclusive Policies
including
Health, Safety, and
Prevention of
Sexual Harassment**

**Components
Measured
GPI 2.0**



Component A: Management Commitment to Gender Parity

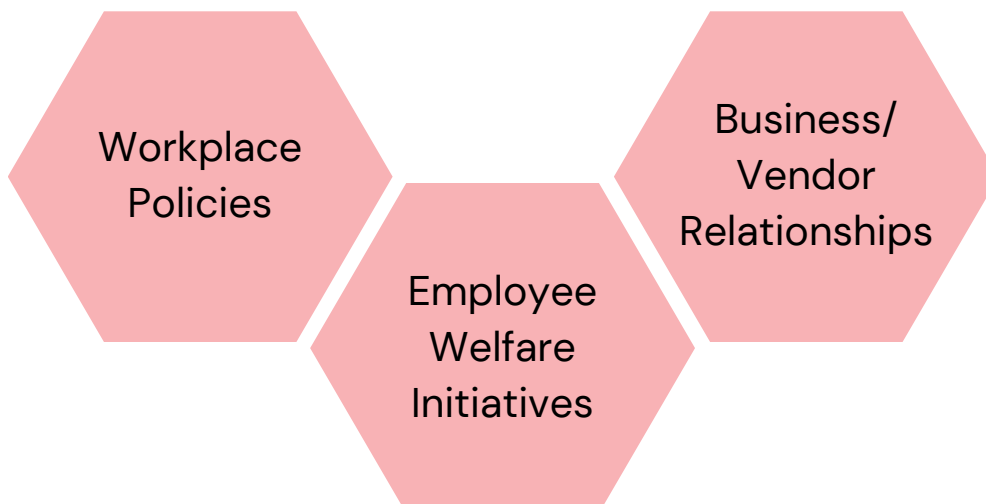
1 Introduction

Influence is a powerful asset. Having influence comes with the privilege of having a say, being heard and having the power to make decisions, amongst other things, all of which often result in a strong sense of self and high self-efficacy. Those with higher designation and authority have a larger circle of influence. Simply put, management has the privilege of influencing the systems they are a part of, and those around them, and the responsibility of making mindful and sustainable decisions.

In today's business context, Social Sustainability, which includes gender parity, is foundational for higher buy-in from stakeholders – employees, customers and shareholders, alike. With this change in the collective view of how businesses should operate, management is increasingly in a precarious position: change, evolve and adapt, or perish.

For gender parity to truly exist within Indian industry, management must be committed to it as a business benefit. The question is, how committed is management towards gender parity? Does management recognize the significance of its role and leverage its influence to make the changes required to achieve gender parity?

2 Sub-components addressed in this Component



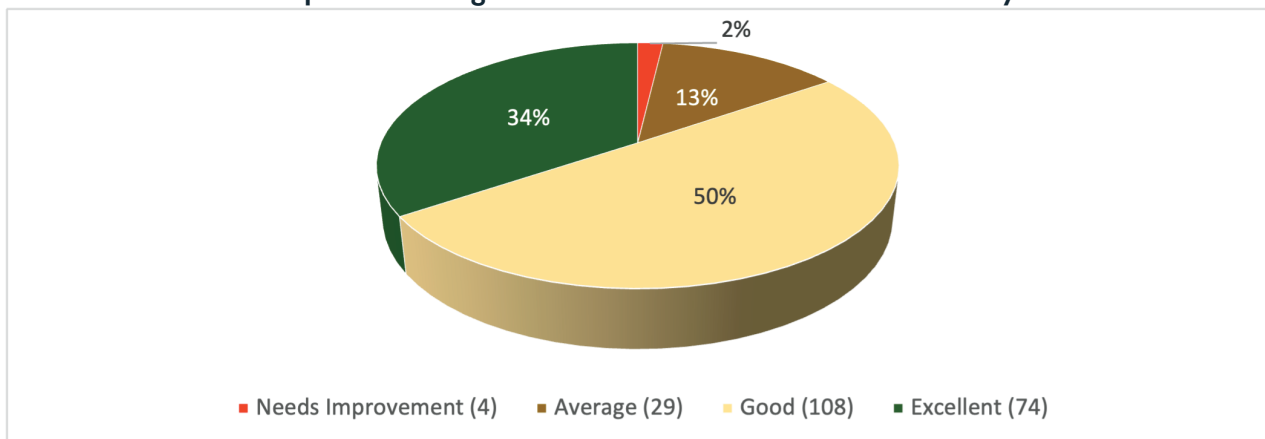
3 Key Insights

Of the 5 components of gender parity included in GPI 2.0, this component has the highest score (84% between "good" and "excellent")

i.e. organizations seem to have a commitment at management level to bring about gender parity within the organization. However, what happens in practice is different

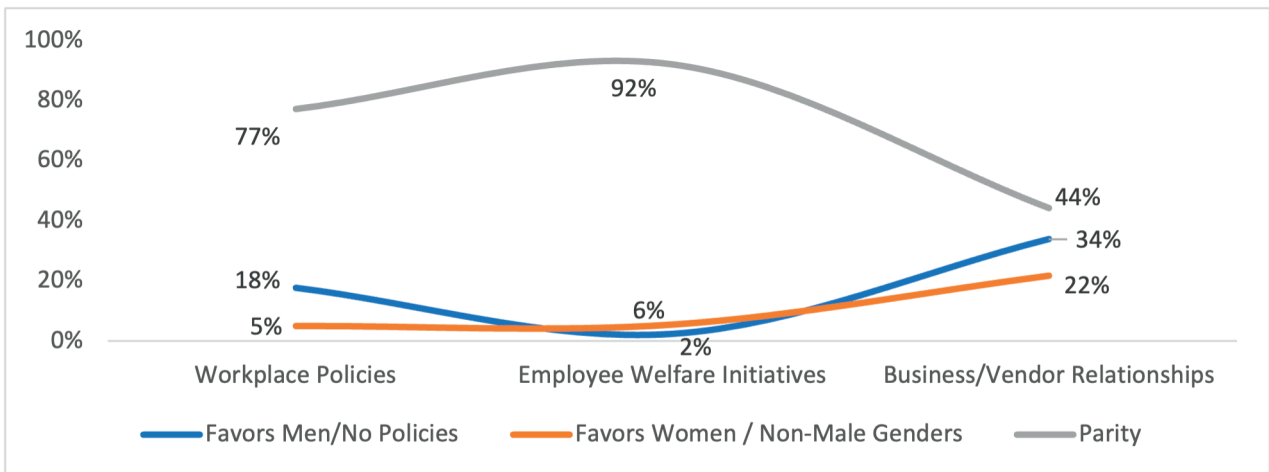
and is depicted through the remaining 4 components discussed subsequently. The following graph presents the status of different organizations in terms of Management Commitment to Gender Parity.

Graph 10: Management Commitment to Gender Parity



84% of the total number of organizations are either in the "good" or "excellent" category in terms of Management Commitment to Gender Parity. Amongst the 3 sub-components, the maximum contribution is of Employee Welfare initiatives, where over 90% of organizations have gender parity, and the other 2 sub-components are not far behind, except for Business/Vendor Relationships, where it is less than half (44%). The following graph presents the status of this component across organizations:

Graph 11: Management Commitment towards different aspects of Gender Parity



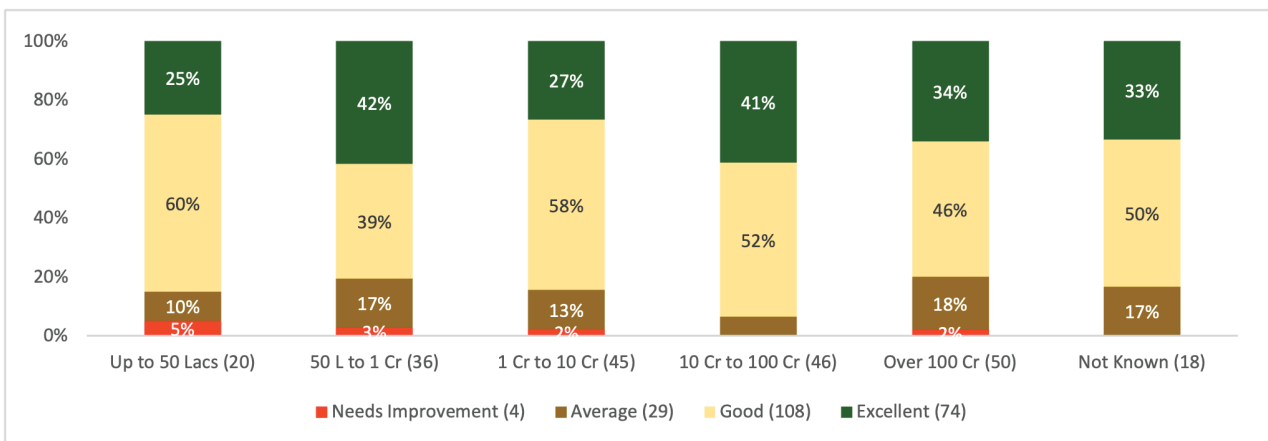
Compared with the previous GPI 2017 score, it seems that organizations have progressed a little in terms of bringing gender parity in their Business/Vendor Relationships, as in GPI 2.0, 44% of organizations demonstrated gender parity, compared with 34% reported in the previous GPI 2017.

Further, the data suggests that

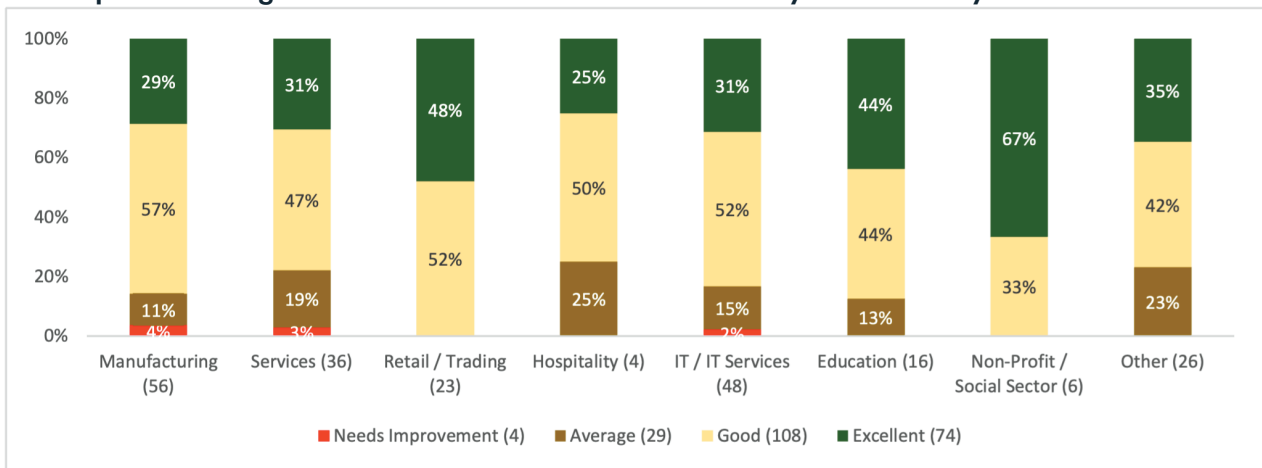
gender parity at the organization level is not so much dependent on the size or type of organization. Generally, there is a perception that large organizations would have greater commitment to gender parity, but this does not seem to be the case,

as reflected in the graph below:

Graph 12: Management Commitment to Gender Parity - defined by Organization's Annual Revenues



Graph 13: Management Commitment to Gender Parity – defined by Different Sectors



Overall, it seems that Management Commitment to Gender Parity is high amongst all types of organizations, as there are only 3 sectors that are in the “needs improvement” category. It must be noted however that this high score does not co-relate with the scores for the other 4 components in the GPI. This is probably due to the fact that men-dominated Senior Management and Boards are taking a call on policies and initiatives on the basis of what they interpret as gender parity. It's not surprising therefore to see an inherent bias with more talk / intent around gender parity than meaningful action on the ground.





Component B: Employment and Career Progression

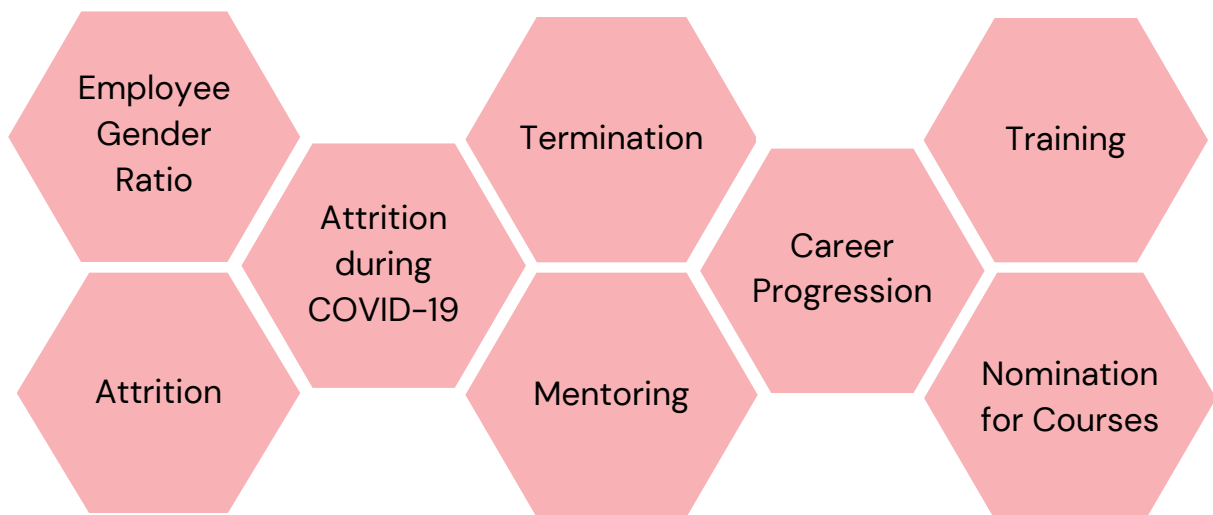
1 Introduction

With the goal of and commitment towards gender parity, it is important to recognize the significance of Employment and Career Progression.

Employment reflects representation, and without representation, Indian industry is significantly missing out on the value that women and other non-male genders can bring to the workforce. Diversity of perspectives, competencies, and capabilities, is often an outcome of a gender-diverse workforce and workplace culture.

It is also essential to understand that representation must go hand in hand with career progression. Not only is it important to have a gender-diverse employee base so that businesses benefit from diversity of thought in decision-making, but focus is also required on how diverse employees progress in their career paths, so that opportunity is provided fairly, a level playing field is created for all irrespective of gender, and valuable employees are retained through proactive action.

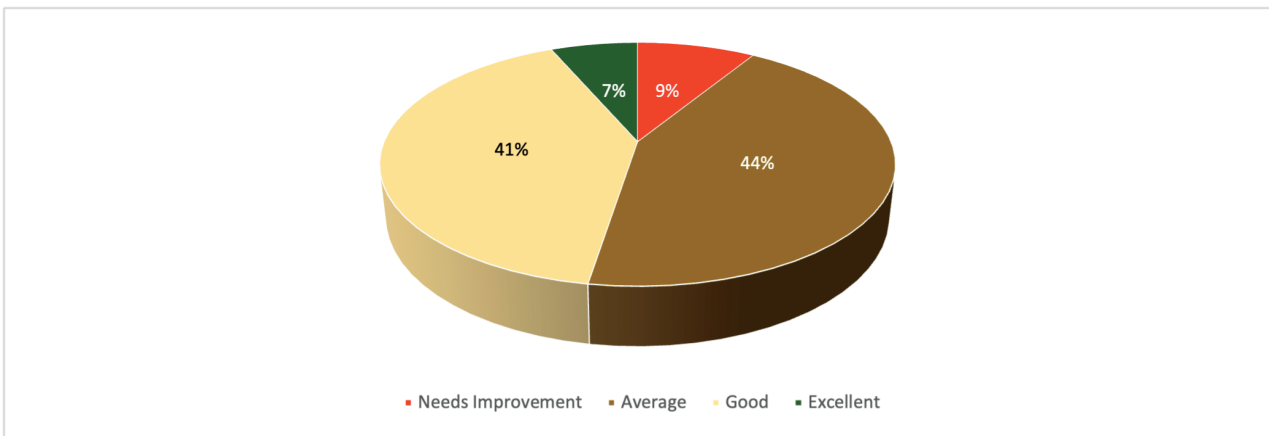
2 Sub-components addressed in this Component



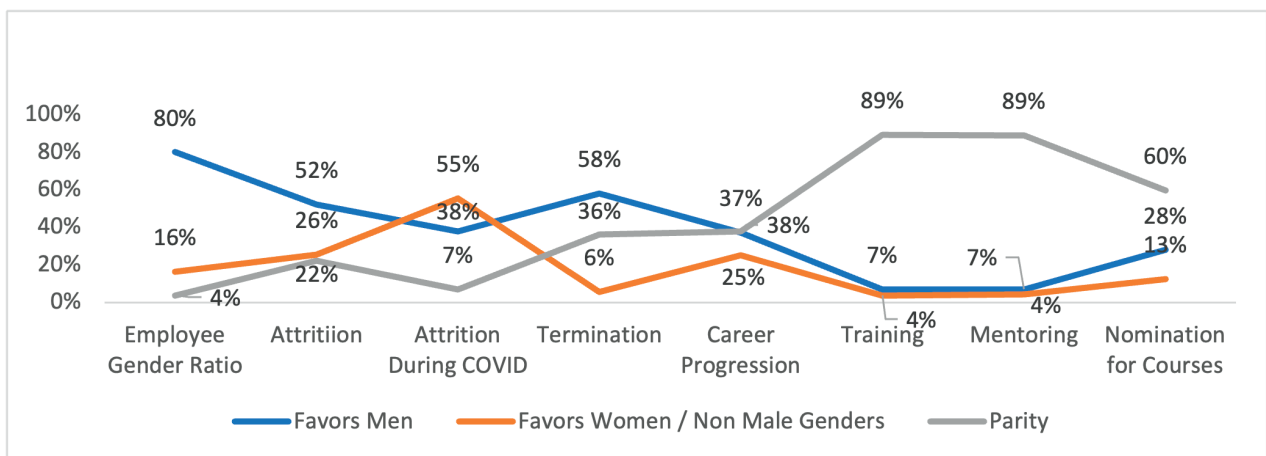
3 Key Insights

This component had the maximum number of sub-components as it is foundational to establishing gender parity within an organization. It had a total of 8 sub-components and therefore an organization could score between 0 and 16. On an average, organizations scored 8.3, which is just half of the maximum score. The representation of organizations in terms of different levels of gender parity is presented in the graph below:

Graph 14: Employment and Career Progression and Gender Parity



Graph 15: Different aspects of Employment and Career Progression and Gender Parity



The data in the graph above presents an interesting finding that within organizations,

there is lower gender parity in terms of recruitment and retention between genders (generally, men are favored), but once employees are recruited, organizations place equal emphasis on training and mentoring employees of all genders.

The earlier GPI 2017 indicated about 19% organizations with parity in employee gender ratio, which is 4% in the current GPI 2.0, indicating a major reduction. Attrition was similar amongst men and women in 26% of the organizations in the earlier GPI 2017 and it remains the same in GPI 2.0. However,

the proportion of organizations reporting gender parity in career progression has sharply reduced from 50% in the earlier GPI 2017, to 38% in GPI 2.0.

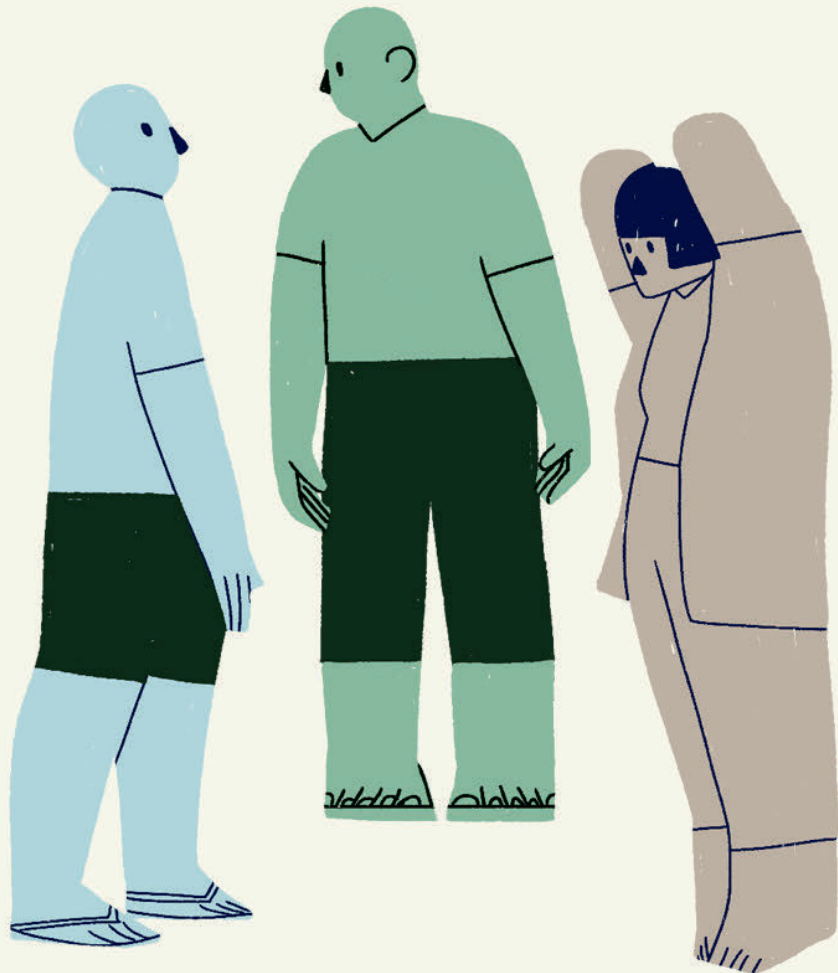
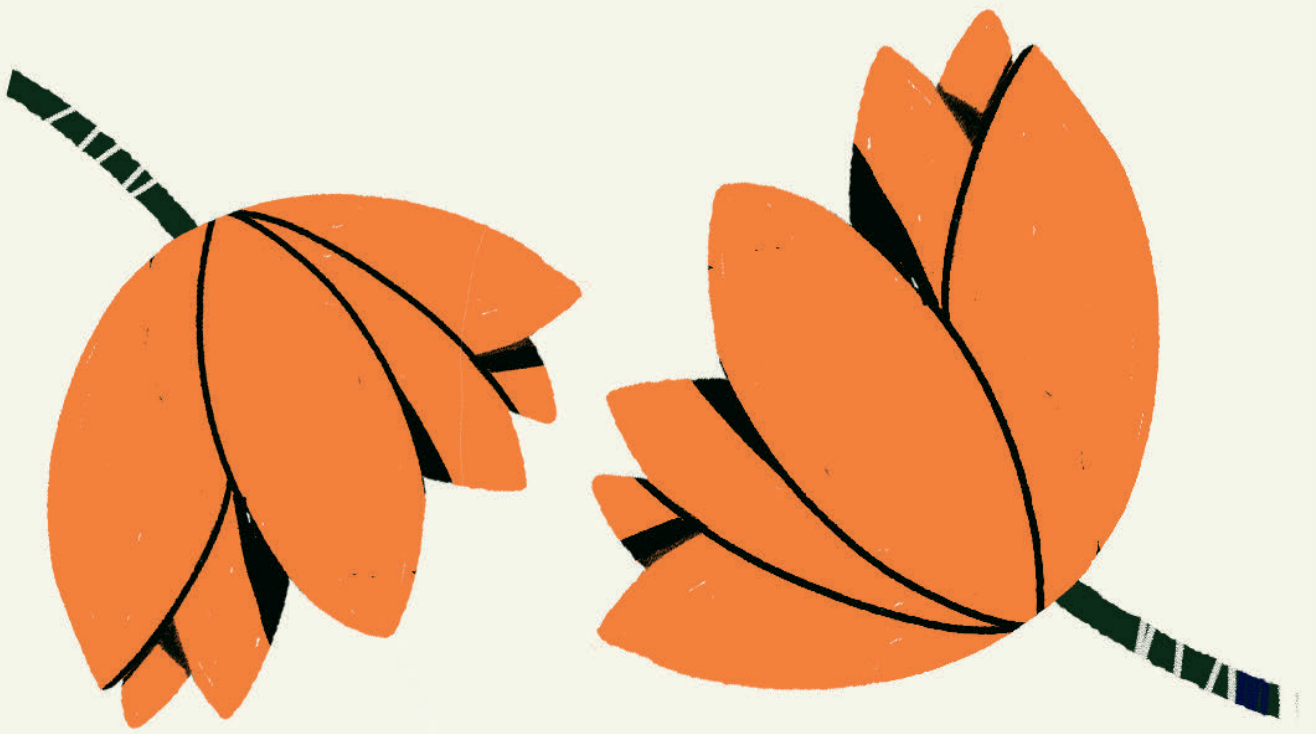
There is not much difference between organizations belonging to different sectors, as the average score for Employment and Career Progression remains between 7.8 and 9 for all sectors, except for the Not-for-Profit sector, where the average is exceptionally high at 12 (against the maximum score of 16).

Similarly, there is not much difference between organizations of different sizes as the average score there ranges between 7.3 and 9.2, the maximum being for organizations with annual revenues of over Rs. 100 Cr. The difference in these averages is not statistically significant.

The major consequence of this component is that

if lack of gender parity is not seriously addressed by organizations, women will eventually find their way and look for other options, which is a loss for organizations. Global trends are moving towards skill-based and merit-based employment within a flexible framework. The focus here is on *how* people do their jobs rather than *from where* they do their jobs.

At a larger level, this has implications not only for gender-based employment, but also for age-based employment.



Component C: Workplace Environment

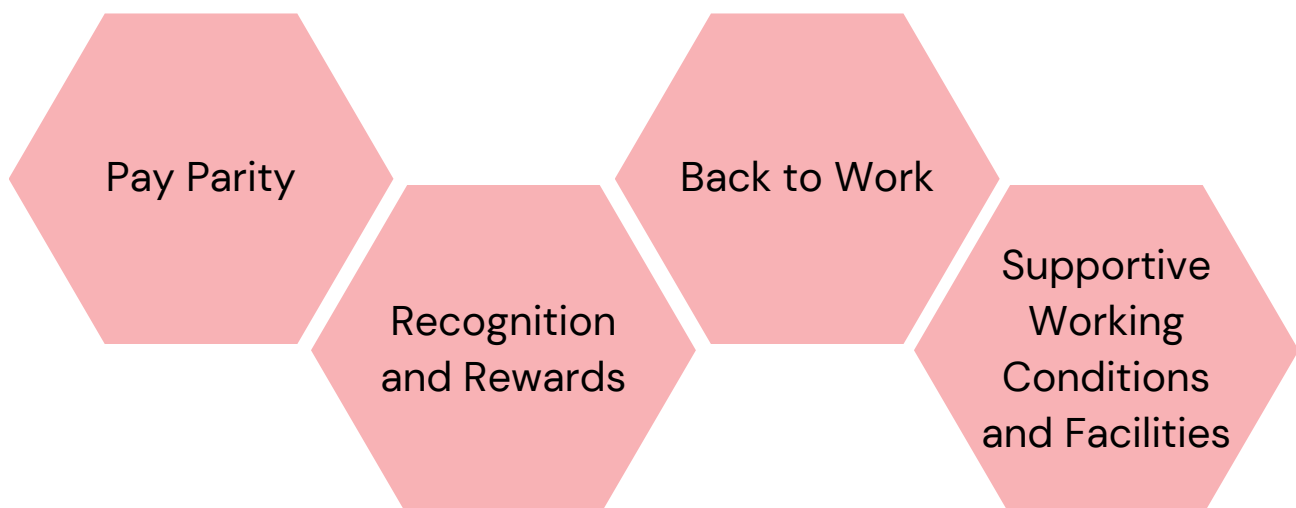
1 Introduction

It is well established that the workplace environment has a telling influence on how people feel and perform. An individual's experience of the workplace is shaped by how they are treated, how they are recognised for their contribution, whether action is taken to support them when challenges arise, and whether they see fairness and inclusiveness in their work environment.

Even though we may think that environment-sensing is subjective since the environment may be experienced differently by different people, there are several aspects that are driven by systems, processes and/or norms and they directly or indirectly influence the workplace environment.

Conscious and sustainable businesses recognise the importance of a healthy workplace environment, and its impact on productivity and job satisfaction, thereby showing the way for workplaces to be places of community as well as profit.

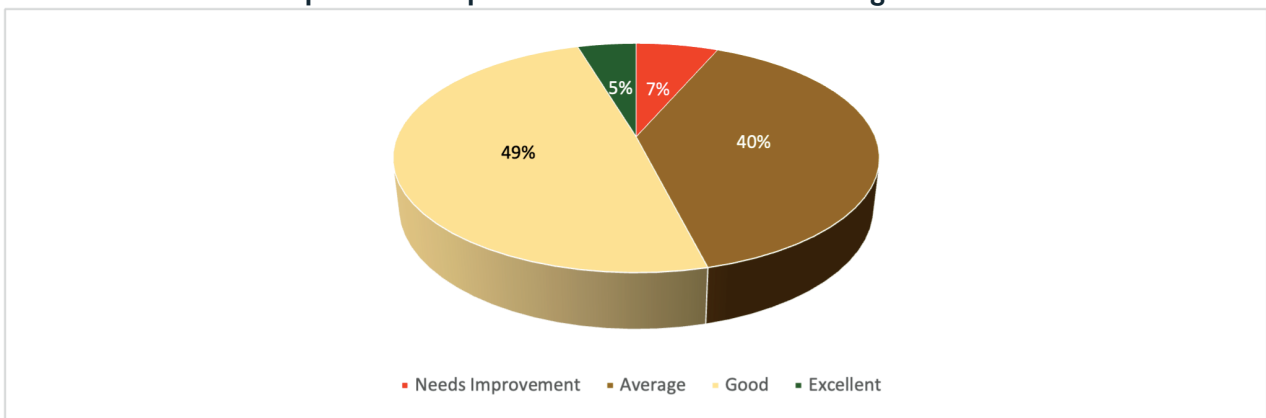
2 Sub-components Addressed in this Component



3 Key Insights

Workplace Environment is a critical component in promoting gender parity because different genders have specific needs, and, if these needs are not met, participation of these genders in the workplace can be impacted. For example, women wear multiple hats – they are simultaneously employees, mothers, wives and primary caregivers for the elderly, while also carrying out routine household chores. The Workplace Environment needs to appreciate this multifaceted reality and the challenges that come with it. Therefore, Workplace Environment is also a strong indication of efforts an organization makes to achieve and sustain gender parity. The overall status of organizations with respect to Workplace Environment is presented in the graph below:

Graph 16: Workplace Environment within Organizations

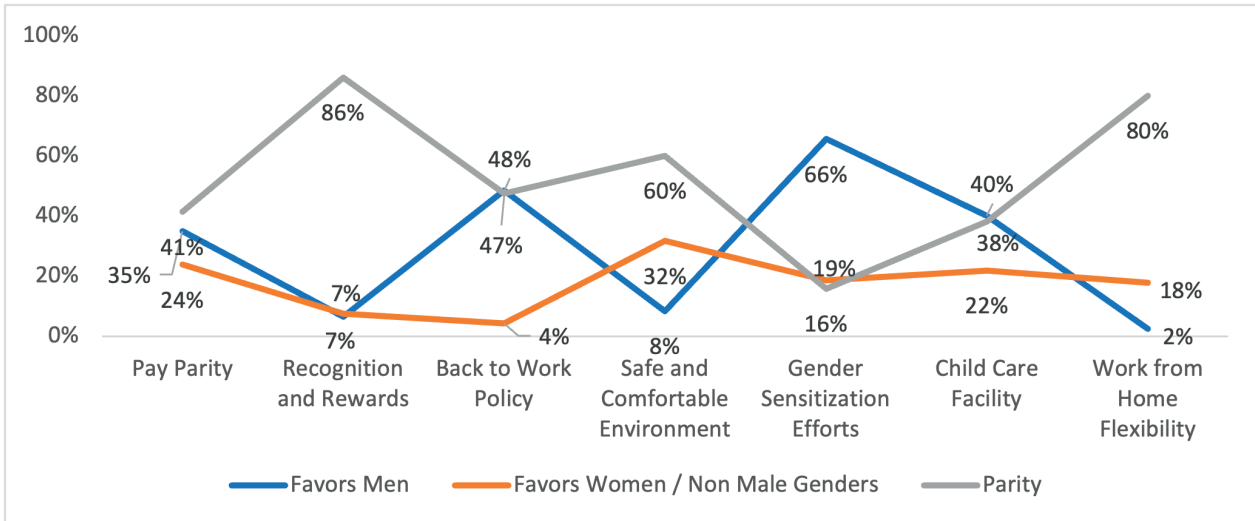


With a maximum attainable score of 14 for any organization, the average score of this component for all organizations is 8.6, which is about 60% of the total obtainable score. This indicates that

organizations need to intentionally build a workplace environment that retains women and supports their career aspirations, while accommodating their unique circumstances, thereby promoting gender parity.

The status of specific sub-components is presented in the graph below:

Graph 17: Different aspects of Workplace Environment and Gender Parity



As is evident from the graph above,

a minimum proportion of organizations (35%) have gender parity in terms of pay parity. This is one of the most telling indicators of the mismatch between genders,

even though management may otherwise have good intent towards establishing gender parity in various aspects of the organization's functioning.

Not many organizations are conducting gender sensitization programs to enhance their employees' awareness around gender-related issues. Except for Rewards and Recognitions and Work from Home facility, all other sub-components of Workplace Environment seem to be on the lower side (i.e. favoring men) when it comes to gender parity.

Almost 42% of organizations in the current GPI 2.0 do not have Back to Work policy and this percentage was lower (28%) in the previous GPI 2017-18.

Similarly, in about quarter of the organizations, there are no facilities (like creches) provided for young children and taking children to office is also restricted. This serves as a constraining factor for women to return to the workplace, especially after a break due to childbirth.

As in the case of Component A (Management Commitment to Gender Parity) and Component B (Employment and Career Progression), the Workplace Environment is not significantly impacted by the size or type of organization.

Workplace Environment is not significantly impacted by the size or type of organization.

The average score ranges between 7.9 (for under Rs. 50 Lakh turnover organizations) and 9.7 (for over Rs. 100 Cr turnover organizations) and the difference is not significant. Similarly, when it comes to type of organization, the average varies from 7.8 (Hospitality sector) to 9.6 (Education sector) and this too is not statistically significant.



Component D: Senior Management and Board Diversity

1 Introduction

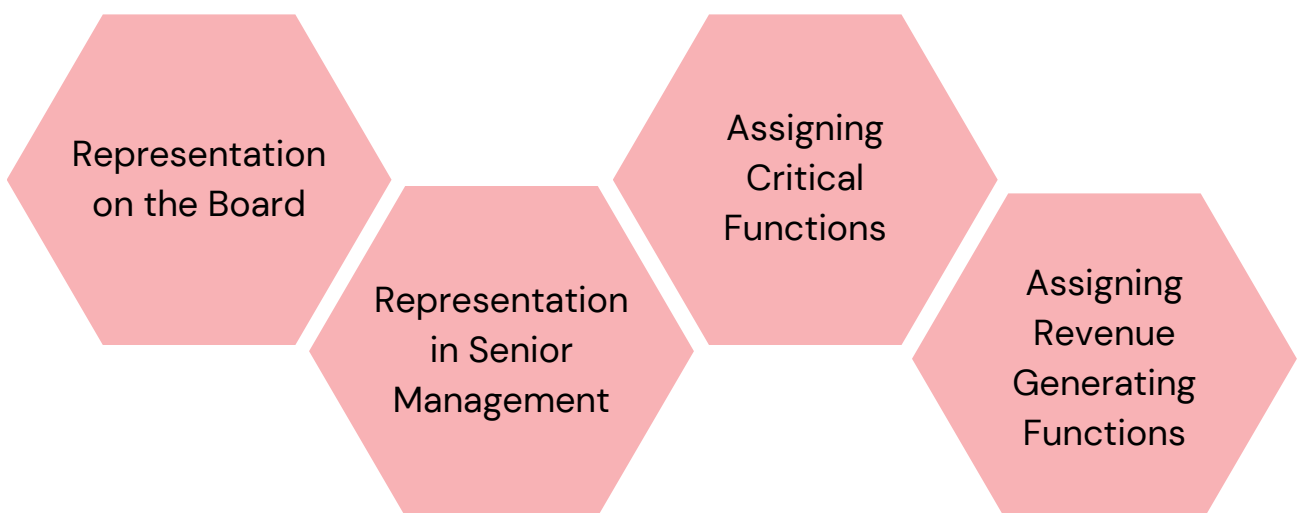
Any change in organizational culture is like gravity – it flows top down. The decisions made by people at the top influence the cycle of change and eventually affect people down the line. Even though we may consider change to be a more complex process, where there is a top-down, bottom-up, outside-in, and inside-out influence, it is a fact that

people in positions of leadership and influence have significant power to change our lives.

Given this truth, top-level management in its most mature form, is expected to take cognisance of all the people it represents.

Gender-diverse representation within top-level management often creates a ripple effect that influences positive change experienced by everyone, giving voice to those often unseen within the organization – everyday employees. How senior management thinks and functions also serves as a source of inspiration for professionals who are looking for guidance and mentorship.

2 Sub-components Addressed in this Component:



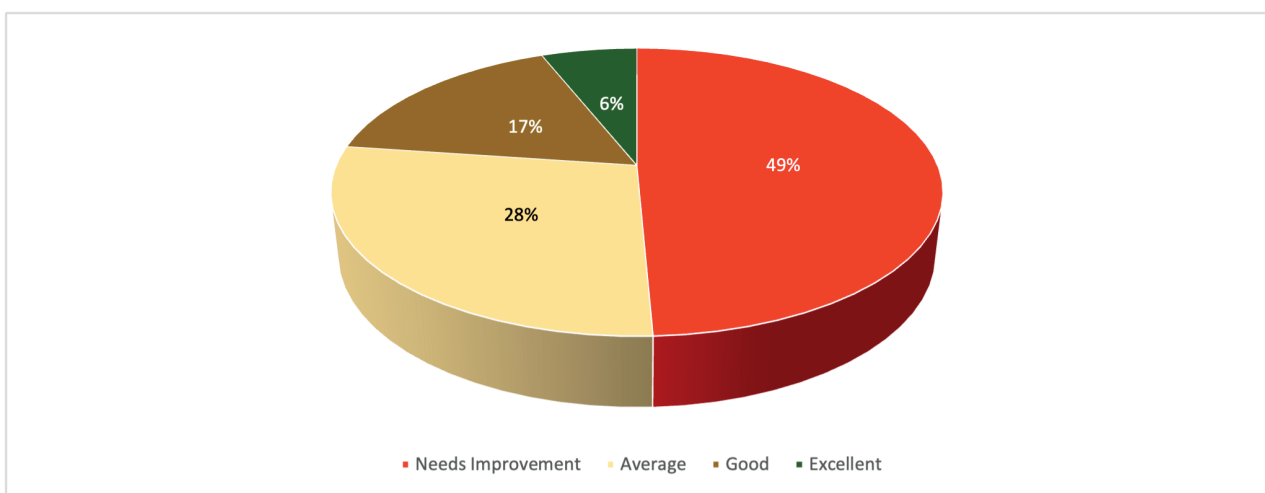
3 Key Insights

Top leadership (persons occupying positions at Senior Management and Board levels) within the organization has the most important role in designing, implementing and changing policies for the organization, including gender-related policies. If there is gender parity at this leadership level, it is likely that gender parity will also be an area of focus at the organization level. As discussed earlier in this Report,

gender parity at the Senior Management and Board level has tremendous influence on the overall gender parity score of the organization.

This section attempts to understand the status of gender parity at this level within organizations, as presented in the graph below:

Graph 18: Senior Management and Board Diversity in the Organization

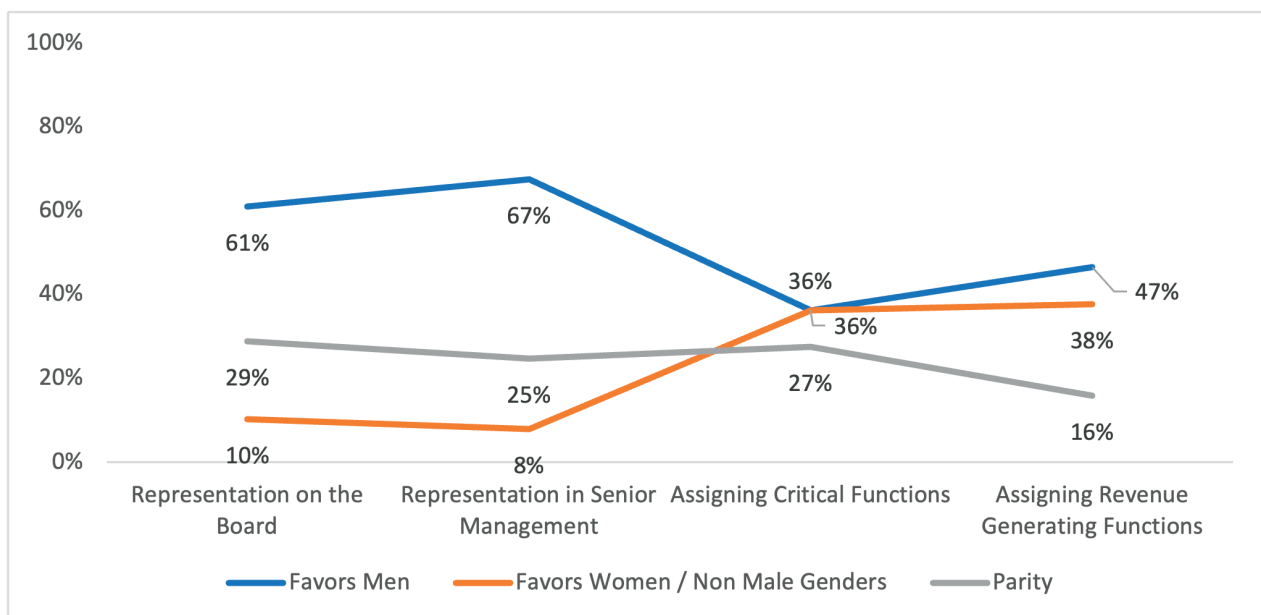


As is evident from graph 18, the largest proportion of organizations fall in the “needs improvement” category (49%). While the proportion of organizations in the “excellent” category is comparable to other components, the increase in the “needs improvement” and “average” categories for this component (77%) indicates that

while organizations may be undertaking other initiatives to bring about gender parity within the organization, they are still far behind in terms of gender parity at Senior Management and Board levels.

This has a telling effect on the overall Gender Parity Index of the organization. The specific sub-components of this component are presented in the graph below:

Graph 19: Senior Management and Board Diversity and Gender Parity



As evident from the graph above, while organizations may be assigning critical and revenue generating functions to men and women / other non-male genders, the latter are poorly represented at Senior Management and Board levels, which highly favors men. The inordinate influence that this leadership layer has on the rest of the organization is one of the key reasons for lower than desired gender parity at the organization level.

Gender quotas on corporate Boards have become a popular tool for policymakers to promote gender parity in the workplace. However, research has shown that

a large number of publicly listed organizations often induct only a single independent woman Director on the Board in order to meet statutory requirements (mandated by The Companies Act, 2013).

While independent women Directors in Indian Boards are well qualified and are likely to have equal or more experience than their men counterparts, they are also less likely to be appointed to key Board Committees such as audit, compensation or nomination committees, compared to men Directors. By sidelining women Board members from influential Board Committees, men-dominated Boards are able to limit the extent of actual reform in their Board and organizational processes. This also means while organizations are quick to demonstrate overt compliance with the law, the induction of a single woman Director is often a tick-the-box action that does virtually nothing to enhance gender parity in the organization.

While the maximum obtainable score for this component is 8, the average score is 2.9, which is 36% of the maximum obtainable score. The average score for this component is lowest for organizations with over Rs. 100 Cr annual revenues (2.12) and highest for organizations where the annual revenues were not known to the respondents (3.8).

This indicates that

while large organizations may be comparatively better at implementing measures and policies to bring about gender parity, they are far behind other organizations in terms of gender parity at Senior Management and Board levels.

Given the gender biases that pervade society and the workplace,

Senior Management and Boards have a key role to play in appreciating the obstacles women face in entering the workforce, the challenges they encounter on their journey up the ranks, and the kind of scrutiny they have to endure when they take on critical leadership roles.

As far as the different sectors are concerned, gender parity at Senior Management and Board level seems to be highest in the Not-for-Profit sector (average score 4.7) and lowest in the Manufacturing sector (average score 2.5). This is not surprising and it matches the general trend in India. In spite of regulations and policy changes, this sector has shown the least progress in bringing about gender parity in the formal sector.



Component E: Inclusive Policies including Health, Safety and Prevention of Sexual Harassment

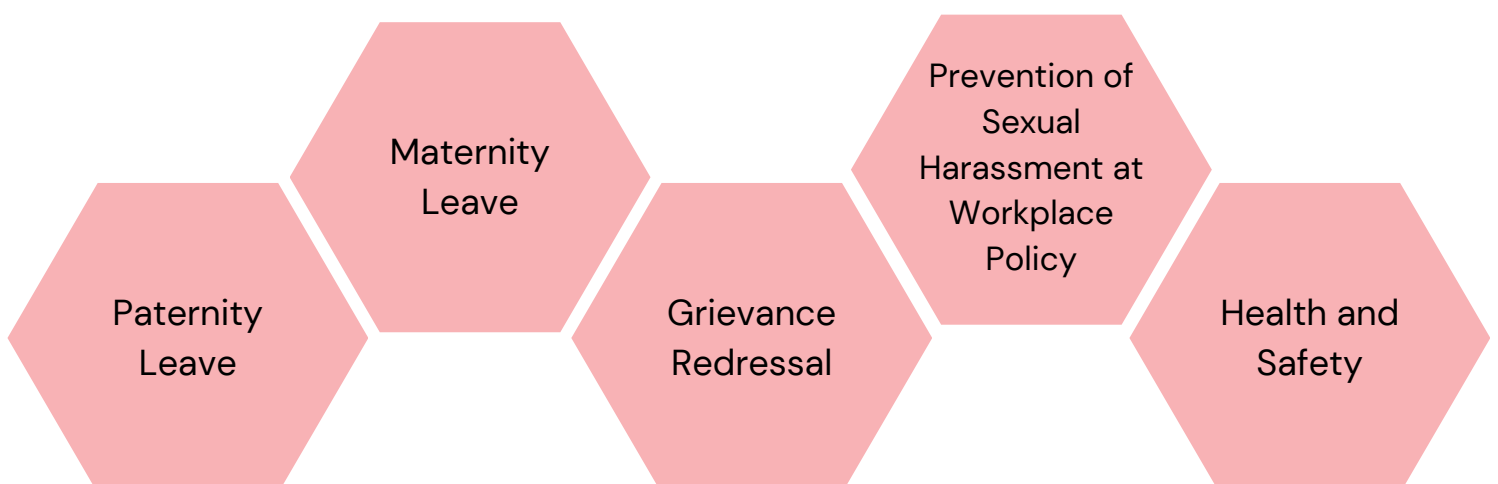
1 Introduction

Change can be difficult. It pushes us to challenge the status quo, think differently, and align our intent to our actions. In times of change, external guidance and direction can go a long way in achieving our goals. Therefore, the importance of Policy.

Policy changes the way we operate, so that everyone can be treated fairly and on par while the organization continues to meet its business goals. Policy also influences the personal lives of employees because it recognizes that professionals are people too, and they must be treated with respect, dignity and parity.

Another way of looking at Policy is management thought translated into action. Not only can Policy provide the support that enables change, it also provides guardrails and parameters for measurement, so that people can be held accountable for their role in bridging the gap between intent and action.

2 Sub-components Addressed in this Component:



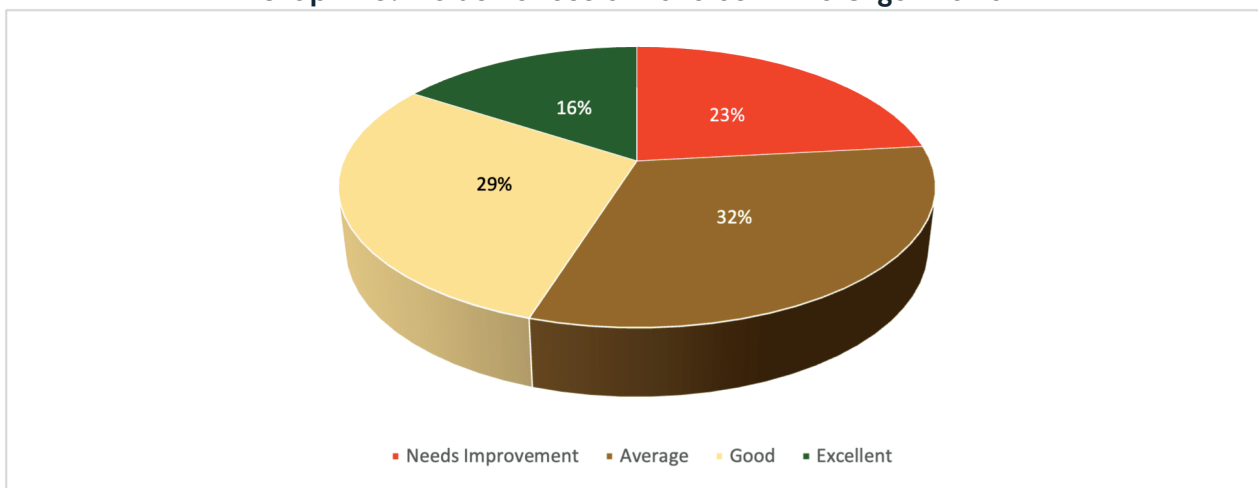
3 Key Insights

Inclusion means an organization that acknowledges differences, values the merit, and leverages the competency, and no one gets left behind because of the biases of the dominant group in the organization.

Inclusion is the physical and emotional outcome of enlightened leadership and an enabling organizational culture. When addressed and supported through the policy framework of an organization, it accelerates gender parity and promotes employees' sense of well-being. Therefore, this component is at least as important as the other 4 components discussed above.

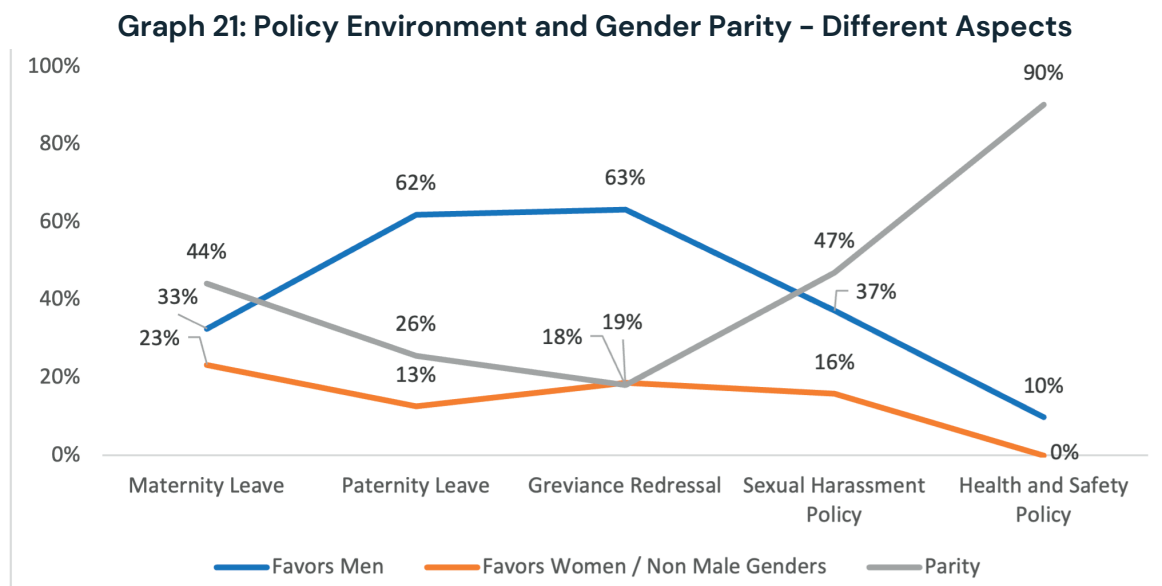
The current status of organizations with respect to the Inclusiveness of their Policies is depicted in the graph below:

Graph 20: Inclusiveness of Policies in the Organization



Almost half of the organizations are at a reasonable level (either “excellent” or “good”) in terms of inclusiveness of their policies related to gender parity. However, for at least a quarter of the organizations, there seems to be a long way to go.

This component has 5 sub-components and each of them has a different contribution to make in bringing about gender parity at the organization level, as indicated in Graph 21 on the following page:



Except for the Health and Safety Policy, there are a limited proportion of organizations that show parity on other aspects of Policy.

For example,

2 out of 3 organizations have men–dominant representation in their Grievance Redressal Committee.

The data also suggests

that many organizations do not have a ‘Prevention of Sexual Harassment at the Workplace’ policy, or at least employees were not aware of it, which is against the provisions of the Prevention of Sexual Offences (POSH) Act 2013.

The average score for all organizations is 4.3 which is less than half of the maximum attainable score of 10. Data also indicates that this average was lowest for smaller organizations i.e. those with annual revenues of up to Rs. 50 Lakh (3.15) and highest for larger organizations with annual revenues of over Rs. 100 Cr (5.5). Also, this score was lowest for organizations in the Retail sector (3.3) and highest for those in the Not-for-Profit sector (5.0).

The data implies that Policy is not being effectively leveraged as an instrument to create an enabling work environment for women. Most organizations say they are committed to gender parity and advancing women into leadership roles. However, what they may fail to acknowledge is that systemic barriers and a lack of proactive policy frameworks are holding women back. As a result, women remain disadvantaged at every stage of their employment and underrepresented in positions of power.



Intersection of Gender and Disability

This segment was explored during this survey and as it is not specifically related to gender parity, it is not included in the GPI 2.0. 2 specific questions were asked to assess if organizations have a policy and/or focus on neurodivergent individuals and those with physical disability.

The data suggests that

34% of organizations are open to employing neurodivergent individuals, without consideration of gender,

and another 26% said they do not employ neurodivergent individuals. Sector-specific differences were observed as 19% IT/ITeS organizations mentioned they do not employ neurodivergent individuals, while 33% of Services organizations, 30% of Manufacturing organizations and 26% of Retail/Trading organizations mentioned they do not employ neurodivergent individuals. It is also important to note that almost 1 in 3 (31%) individuals chose not to respond to this question and amongst them, 60% were those representing Senior Management or the Board of Directors.

When asked if their organization has a policy to support the growth of physically challenged / disabled or neurodivergent individuals, the largest proportion (41%) said they don't have any such policy and about a quarter (28%) mentioned that they have a gender neutral policy for supporting such individuals. Here also, about a quarter (23%) decided not to respond to the question and another 7% were not aware if there was any such policy in their organization.

Not much information is available through secondary sources for comparison, but it seems evident that the formal sector in India is not yet prepared to accept and engage with neurodivergent individuals and those with physical disabilities. Significant efforts are needed to sensitize corporate India to build a welcoming and conducive work environment for the neurodivergent and physically disabled community.

Summary and Recommendations

In the past few decades, notwithstanding the setbacks experienced due to COVID-19, and societal biases and barriers in general, women have made progress in the workforce, both formal and informal. This has been achieved, on the one hand, through Governmental interventions and forward thinking organizations, and, on the other, by overcoming obstacles, challenging gender norms and showcasing the unique value that women bring to the workplace.

Government has taken long overdue steps to improve women's participation in the workforce as well as the quality of their employment. Protective clauses have been incorporated into labour laws for equal opportunity and a conducive work environment, including parity in wages for the same work, enhancement in paid maternity leave from 12 to 26 weeks, provision of mandatory crèche facilities in establishments with 50 or more employees, and permitting women to work night shifts with adequate safety measures, etc.

Nevertheless, there is a long way to go. Even as women grow in their careers and graduate into leadership and senior management, the gender gap continues to widen at a disturbing rate. Even though numerous studies and indicators show that diverse teams and women in senior management positions tend to create healthier and more financially sound and sustainable organizations, representation of women in leadership positions in general, and particularly at senior management and Board levels continues to lag.

While it is appropriate to recognise the well-intentioned efforts being made across different sectors and organizations to correct the imbalance and bring about gender parity, it is equally important to acknowledge the grave mismatch between intent and action. In many organisations, diversity initiatives including gender parity are treated as a tick-the-box activity, with the result that tokenism replaces concrete and sustained measures.

The GPI 2.0 has highlighted several such areas where gender parity in organizations seems to be a "good to have" rather than a "must have". As a result, there is little organizational impetus and the needle has hardly moved. In some cases, the needle has moved in the opposite direction in the last 5 years (compared with the GPI 2017). Drawing from the findings of GPI 2.0, the following recommendations can be made for the consideration of policy makers and change agents at organizational and Government-levels:

1

Given the strategic importance of **Senior Management and the Board** and their influence in the organization, it is clear that women (and the organization) will benefit from greater diversity at this level. Going beyond mere tokenism is key to higher representation and participation of women at Senior Management and Board levels. Research suggests that once 3 or more women join a Board – which averages 9 to 20 members – a critical mass is reached whereby women are both more likely to speak and be listened to. Therefore, the recommendation is to induct more women Directors on the Board and also elect / nominate them to lead important initiatives like strategic Board Committees.

3

Policies are mostly reactive – often in response to Government / legal asks or a problem on hand. Can we flip this outlook and be proactive and forward thinking in policy-making, with the emphasis on keeping more women at the workplace and mitigating the issues they face as a result of multiple priorities (home, work, children, etc.)?

2

Eliminate gender bias and discrimination through system-wide efforts to promote gender parity in the **Recruiting, Hiring, and Retention** stages of the employee lifecycle. A fair playing field can be created through the use of gender-neutral language in job descriptions / postings, anonymizing applicant résumés, providing training for unbiased interviewing, and providing training to recruiting managers to remove unconscious bias and/or confirmation bias in the recruiting and talent acquisition process.

4

Recognise and appreciate that women have different life stages from men. This appreciation can lead to **Policies** that provide greater flexibility, work-from-home options, infrastructure facilities (through tie-ups) like creche services, and return-to-work culture provide opportunities for experienced women professionals to reclaim a promising career after a break. This also means educating the system that organizations should not lose women talent because of unique life stages that impact women more than men – like childbirth.

5

Career Progression for women within the organization has to be a structured, systemic process where multiple stakeholders in the organization – HR, Business, Sponsors (leadership) and women themselves – need to come together and look to the future with a common goal to ensure that the percentage of women employees is maintained at Junior, Middle and Senior levels. The ideal ratio of women employees could be 48–50% at Junior levels, 35–40% at Middle levels and 20–25% at Senior levels.

6

Apart from the routine competency-building initiatives for employees at large, ask women what they need in terms of training and **Career Progression** support rather than decide for them. Take their inputs to create a specific ‘Career Progression Package’ for women that focusses on, amongst others, skill upgradation through training and development, executive presence, avenues for growth and promotions, flexibility in the work environment and educating managers about the value of gender parity.

7

Implement specific Coaching and Mentoring programs as part of **Career Progression** for women at various levels of the organization so that they are well-equipped to take on more challenging roles and/or critical projects, build their executive presence, network across and outside the organization, and take strategic decisions that can advance their careers.

8

To build a supportive **Workplace Environment**, set up Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) dedicated to women by business units / sectors within the organization. Such niche forums enable women to meet, share ideas, build networks and boost their confidence to assume roles in highly specialized career streams.

When the **Workplace Environment** values Gender Intelligence (acceptance that men and women bring different, yet complementary skill-sets to the workplace), it is possible to make the ecosystem see the real value in diversity. It is well established that women bring to organizations values like empathy, compassion, inclusivity, consensus-building, stability and emotional intelligence. These were hitherto seen as 'soft skills' but have undergone a significant shift, driven by the pandemic and changing work patterns, to now become high priority skills for most leaders irrespective of gender. Therefore, it is important to educate and sensitize the business ecosystem on the idea of Gender Intelligence through training / orientation programs.

To create a conducive **Workplace Environment**:

- Establish Equal Effort for Equal Reward.
- Design clear Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) policies where Inclusion is an overt, visible exercise, not a by-the-way, by chance exercise.
- Focus on representation of women at different stages of the organization.
- Build a specific-to-women Growth & Transformation agenda.
- Shape an organization culture that values women's leadership.
- Re-constitute the Grievance Redressal Committee to have representation from all genders, and non-dominance of men.

In terms of **Health, Safety and Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policies**:

- Education campaigns across the width and depth of the organization on what constitutes sexual harassment and microaggressions.
- Paternity Leave policy that is at least 30% of the Maternity Leave policy. Paternity Leave helps subvert gender-biased notions of division of labour and encourages men to take on caregiving responsibilities, thus reducing the burden of unpaid care work on women. Currently, women in India spend over 5 times as many hours as men on unpaid care work, which limits their ability to participate in the workplace.
- Attention on Period / Menstrual Leave including menopausal symptoms in Leave criteria.
- Create family-friendly policies through the adaptation of Sick / Casual Leave as Family Caregiver Leave.
- Progressive policies like a gender-neutral Adoption Leave to support employees who adopt a child or have a baby through surrogacy.
- Set up creche facilities at the workplace as per the Maternity Benefit Act guidelines.

12

Create a structured **Supplier Diversity program** as an organizational policy, so that business has an opportunity to partner with suppliers / vendors that are owned by women or marginalized groups. Develop Supplier Diversity policies to ensure that a certain percentage of contracts should be awarded to women-owned businesses.

13

Encourage diversity of the mind by allocating a percentage of employment for people who are **neurodivergent or physically disabled**.

14

Provide **Training and Support , including Infrastructure Support, for women to work remotely** could help them balance their work and caregiving responsibilities better. This needs to be balanced by not shaming working from home arrangements for mothers and caregivers. As iterated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, flexible work models can be the key to increasing the participation of women in the workforce and bringing about gender parity.

Create **Return to Work / Back2Work / Career Reboot programs** specifically designed for women who have taken a career break, or have been significantly underemployed, and would like support and training / re-skilling to transition back into the workforce.

Organizations can create a level playing field towards gender parity by identifying patterns of bias in the way women employees are hired, treated and remunerated and then make appropriate systemic changes towards corrective action. Research has shown the value of these practices in fully leveraging women's talents and contribution in the workplace.

Even as we examine and debate the causes of the sub-optimal state of gender parity across various aspects of an employee's lifecycle, we need to double down on the implementation of possible solutions, including changing mindsets and belief systems. It is no secret that several progressive recommendations, even under the framework of a law or guideline, suffer from lack of implementation.

Gender parity is not just a workplace issue. The challenges need to be addressed on both, home and work fronts, because women play on outsized role in the former, and its easy to forget that role since it is largely invisible or disregarded in the workplace.

As we unlearn designated gender roles, responsibilities and expectations as individuals, we can motivate workplaces to follow suit and create policies, practices and programs that address various aspects of gender parity. This will bring about a positive contagion that will inspire an equitable future, free of gender bias. Intent is important but implementation is key.

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Knowledge and Research Partner



CONSCIOUS DEVELOPMENT

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Conscious Development is a human development organization whose purpose is to enable individuals and organisations to bridge the gap between potential and possibility.

We support leaders in building equitable, sustainable and uplifting workplaces. Our work is to identify, measure, educate and create scalable and sustainable shifts by re-inventing mental models and building adaptability, leading to delivery of systemic results.

Our focus areas are Leadership Capital Development, Human and Social Sustainability, Diversity & Culture, Well-being, and Executive Coaching. We use neuroscience, positive psychology, ethnographies, process-work, and strengths-based approaches to build aware leaders, develop cohesive teams and shape resonant cultures.

Conscious Development is passionate about Gender Parity, Equity & Intelligence in the workplace. We partnered with FLO in 2020 to design and carry out The Greater 50: Call to Action Study & Recommendations, and we are proud to once again partner with FLO to build the Gender Parity Index (GPI) 2.0. Our approach is to capture the authentic voices of stakeholders in a holistic and transparent manner. We hope this effort will facilitate fundamental shifts in workplace culture.

It has been a pleasure conducting this study with FLO and we look forward to tracking its impact in the Indian corporate sector. We imagine an inclusive, equitable and socially just future where every individual and organization thrives.

We also acknowledge the immense contribution of our partners Impact PSD in building the GPI 2.0 and the data analysis for this unique project.

